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THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE TASKS OF THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES

«Within the limits of this territory, an evolving form of political authority has continued without interruption from the early seventeenth century to our own time, giving Lebanon a separate and distinct identity.»

«Among the emirs and sheikhs difference in religion was no barrier to close cooperation... All belonged to the same political system, and feudal chieftains of different religions and sects would formally address one another as brothers, or as cousins.»

K. S. SALIBI
in
The Modern History of Lebanon

It has become clear that the conflict in Lebanon is a class one. The reactionary forces supported by the reactionary Arab regimes and imperialism are trying to achieve two aims:

1. To strike the Palestinian resistance movement in order to weaken it and force it into the proposed settlement as a very week partner.
2. To strike the Lebanese masses movement and abort their struggle for social, economic and political reform.

These two aims are complementary to each other and one can not be achieved without the other since the Palestinian resistance movement and the Lebanese national and progressive forces are allied together. Hence their immediate future is one. During the earlier part of the clashes, the dominant force on the progressive side was the Palestinian militia forces. This has been altered and the Palestinian forces now play a supporting role specially in the areas neighbouring the camps.

As the battle developed, it took its natural and more accurate dimensions. It clearly showed that the struggle is one of the oppressed classes against the reactionary bourgeoise forces. Although there is a dominant Moslem majority within the progressive forces rank and file, this should not give the impression that the conflict is a confessional one as the bourgeoise news media tried to show it. Two events lately proved that progressive forces whether within the Christian or Moslem population of Lebanon can not be outside the battle and that they will carry their struggle against their class enemies regardless of their religion and wherever these class enemies exist. We can also say that the rightist forces regardless of religion have also acted according to their class affiliation.

The last month witnessed wide clashes in the area of Koura, which is fully Christian. These clashes came as a result of the provocation of the rightist forces there against the left. Another example is the position of the Moslem bourgeoise leaders who openly came out against the leftist forces inorder to satisfy their class ambitions and by that crossing over to the clear field of Arab reaction. Saeb Salam, one of these Moslem leaders, pushed certain Moslem clergymen to attack communists and communism. The event took place after Salam visited Saudi Arabia, center of Arab reaction, and conferred with the officials there and received some «financial help» that will help him hire more mercenaries to his side. But the strong response from the masses and the leftist parties forced Salam to silence.

The two quotations preceding this article best describe Lebanon's situation. While it is a very peculiar country it does not escape from the general class analysis of society. As the second paragraph shows, the higher classes always enjoyed good relations even during the most bloody days of confessional conflict in Lebanon. These two characteristics of Lebanon gives a wider division of political groups, which in our opinion are:

1. The Christian reactionary fascist forces. These are confessional in character and they represent the sector of the society which benefits most from the present system. They are represented in the Phalangist Party, the National Liberal Party of Cameel Chamoun (President of Lebanon from 1952-1958), the Front of the Guards of Cedars, and other smaller groups. The main characteristic of these forces at this stage is that they are the «irregular forces» fighting against the progressive forces.

2. The Christian liberal forces. These accept the confessional system but would like to see a gradual change in Lebanon that will reform the system through the parliamentary bourgeois method. They refuse to participate in the present clashes and are best represented in the National Bloc of Raymond Edde.

3. The Moslem reactionary forces. Also confessional and benefit from the present system but to a lesser degree from the first group. They are represented by the traditional Moslem leadership of the present Prime minister Rashid Karami and by the former prime ministers of Lebanon. Their alliance with the progressive movement at this stage came as a result of the efforts to bring down the military cabinet which lived for a short period after the beginning of the clashes. They stand against any radical change but fear losing the support from the rank and file of the Moslems who are their main electoral constituents.

4. The traditional patriotic forces who are part of the regime and demand a change in the main institutions and the constitution in order to transform Lebanon into a modern secular state. These parties who have been established for tens of years have not been capable to mobilize the masses or to draw the necessary program that would lead them to secure the necessary minimum of the masses demands.

5. The radical leftist parties which are relatively new and adopt a clear line from the regime and believe that revolutionary violence is the only method to bring about a radical change in the so-

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Publishing any type of newspaper or magazine during these times has become quite an ordeal. Local Beirut newspapers had difficulty in securing the workers, enough paper and distributors. Many daily newspapers and weekly magazines still have their work interrupted. Beirut's only English language newspaper does not come out during clashes, which is often, because its offices are located in downtown. For foreign correspondents it was finding a safe place to send their news stories from. The least of our problems, we admit, was to find safe places although at time the continuous shelling by the fascist reactionary forces did influence our ability to concentrate. But this made us more determined to get the PFLP-Bulletin out to our comrades, supporters and sympathizers in Europe, the Americas and the rest of the world.

At times we felt it impossible to publish the Bulletin in its regular form. We searched for new methods but finally found a press that is ready and enthusiastic—although it is its first experience in setting up latin words. With our humble abilities but sincere dedication to our allies and readers we publish this issue. Our task would have been easier if we had access to more facilities

This issue concentrates on Lebanon We tried to give the reader an objective view of what is going on with a necessary background and without confusing him too much since Lebanon is a very peculiar case. We also took into consideration that the Palestinian resistance sympathizers have been following the daily developments through the local media of their countries The issue also documents the developments of the proposed settlement and the recorded positions of the PFLP during the last three months.

One last point. We do not know when will this issue and future issues reach our readers. Considering the circumstances and the non-existence of mail in Lebanon most of the time, we hope that every reader will make his effort to pass his copy to another Bulletin reader who has not received it.

We hope to receive a word from our readers now and then that they are receiving the Bulletin. We believe we have a majority of dedicated readers and most credit will go to their support as we pursue the continuation of publishing the Bulletin.

The PFLP-Bulletin,
International Relations
Committee,
Beirut — December 22, 1975

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR FULL OF SUCCESS AND VICTORIES AGAINST ALL CLASS AND NATIONAL ENEMIES.

"NATIONAL AUTHORITY" & "REGIONAL AUTONOMY" - NEW ZIONIST SCHEMES

During the past two months the Palestinians of the occupied territories (West Bank) have been in active revolt against Israeli rule and the new Zionist plans. The new Israeli machinations is to try to implement their projects of 'local authority' and 'regional autonomy'. Thereby they hope to prop up a new Palestinian leadership as an alternative to the resistance movement. Hundreds and thousands of Palestinians demonstrated in all the major West Bank cities and towns, expressing their vehement opposition to the Zionist tricks and their solid support of the Resistance Movement.

The demonstrations started on October 6, 1975 in the cities of Ramallah and Al-Bira and spread to Nablus and Galilee. The people confronted the Israeli soldiers armed with determination, sticks and rocks. Hundreds were arrested by the Israeli authorities. Ironically, the Zionists attempted to establish a new settlements (colonies) on the West Bank while the demonstrations proceeded. The masses responded with even bigger demonstrations facing hundreds of Israeli soldiers armed to the teeth, with tanks and armoured cars. The Palestinians of the West Bank have clearly expressed and are continually expressing their rejection of the Zionist presence in their midst.

The first stage of the municipal elections has already been completed. The last phase will be in March 1976 and it is expected that this too will be confronted by the wrath of the people.

The PFLP played a leading role in organizing and guiding the West Bank demonstrations. PFLP militants burned 3 buses of the enemy and distributed a communique warning traitors who cooperate with the Israeli authorities as follows:

«The PFLP declares its responsibility for many of the strikes directed at the well-known personalities who cooperate with the Zionist enemy in the occupied territories. They aim to enhance the plans of the enemy.» In collusion with the military administration these traitors aim to 'establish an alternative to the Palestinian revolution. Hence one of the PFLP's cells burned Fathi Qamhawi's car as a last warning. In addition to being a traitor, he is the president of Jenin's chamber of Commerce. Another cell burned Ghaleb Khalif's business, also as a last warning. Four other traitors were presented with warnings.

On another level, PFLP cells led a campaign against the Zionist plans of establishing 'local authority' and 'regional autonomy' and their desperate attempts of acquiring a legal cover for these plans through the municipal elections. In response the PFLP militants wrote slogans on the walls of houses, Mosques and churches in the cities of Ramallah, Jenin and Nablus:

We will not vote
Go out of our houses
Hell to the traitors

The other slogans raised included:

'a. National Authority is obtained by force, not settlements.

b. No to the capitulationist settlement!
Yes to the continuation of struggle!

c. The fighting gun is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

d. We reject the transformation of our people's victories, and the blood of our martyrs into papers for settlement and retreat!'

This last round of demonstrations and revolts in the West Bank is in response to Israeli plans of imposing 'national authority' and 'regional autonomy' on our people. It is imperative to explain the basic aims of these plans in the context of the overall Zionist colonial policy. In the meantime we must cite the fact that the military operations of the resistance are increasing And, as the Zionist forces continue to direct their violence against our people, it is essential to invoke revolutionary violence—liberating violence by the nationalist forces to counter the criminal violence of the Zionist state of Israel.

Amilcar Cabral summarises the role of warfare in the phase of national liberation quite succinctly. He points out that it gives the people «*the conviction that they can triumph over their enemy. Its dynamics creates the most favourable conditions for the resolution of tribal and social antagonism. By aiming at the total destruction of colonial structures, it accelerates the emergence of those revolutionary forces who will irreversibly influence the conquest of the nationalism phase.*» The destruction or negation of the colonial structures must take into account that under occupation—colonial rule there is no room for democratic institutions. When the colonial administration tries to concoct schemes for the implementation of 'democratic rule', we must clearly recognize that the basic purpose is to postpone and, if possible, to eliminate the development of national liberation which postulates socialist revolution. In turn, the forces that cooperate with the occupants in implementing 'democratic rule' will ultimately be used as part of the enemy's arsenal in his attempt to destroy the people's movement.

ISRAELI COLONIAL STRATEGY SINCE 1967:

After enumerating and identifying the basic features of this colonial strategy we will then present a brief analysis of the underpinnings of the proposed 'local authority' and 'regional autonomy' (see Bulletin 16 'Israeli Colonial Policy: The Palestinian Response'; and Bulletin 17 'Occupied Palestine' for further background).

The above-mentioned strategy which was invoked after the war of June 1967 in the newly acquired territories can be summarized into the following categories: A) Policy of 'non-presence'; B) Policy of 'non-intervention'; C) Policy of 'open-bridges'.

'Non-presence' essentially meant covert presence. Efforts were made to avoid overt Israeli military presence, with the exception of critical times. Traitors working with, or through the local police forces were entrusted the ensuring of colonization. However, overt military presence was not absent and, particularly during periods when resistance movement operations were on the rise. Under such circumstances, reactive or 'preemptive' strikes were launched (reminiscent of U.S. military policy in Indochina). Shortly after the normalization of the particular region the overt military presence was terminated and covert means were relied upon again.

Covert control to a certain extent could have a numbing effect on the masses. They do not see the occupation soldiers of the enemy before their eyes, hence their nationalist aspirations and feelings diminish. For example there are many Palestinian towns which do not see Israeli soldiers unless the operations of the resistance movement increase in this particular town or in its neighbourhood.

'Non-intervention' in local affairs, the second step in the colonial strategy essentially provided the local population with the flexibility to take care of its own affairs. The only exceptions are matters pertaining to security which would effect the strategic goals of the colonial policy. For example courts have been permitted to function on the basis of Jordanian Jurisprudence and local administration structures have been kept intact. Furthermore, the publishing of local newspapers has been permitted, even if they are critical towards the occupation and those who collaborate. The only stipulation is that they must not interfere in matters or affairs pertaining to security.

Finally, the third dimension of this strategy—'open-bridges', has been the embryo of Arab-Israeli trade. It has kept the borders between Jordan and the occupied territories open. Through this channel Israeli produced goods have been exchanged for Arab commodities. Such relations have helped to expose the elements or classes who benefit from the colonial conditions. After the Jordanian civil war of 1970, many of the presidents of the Chambers of Commerce requested a convening of a session of the Arab League to discuss the strategy of 'open-bridges'. They were lead by Nicola Attiya the former municipal leader of Sahour and owner of the Jordanian Plastic Company At the abovementioned session it was decided to oppose the closure of the 'bridges'. This policy provides the Israeli economy with important revenues as well as commodities from the Arab World needed by them. The exchange takes place at low rates, due to the pricing techniques used in such transactions.

This three-tiered colonial strategy was predicated on Israeli self-assuredness, fear of the development of Palestinian national identity, Israeli feeling of omnipotence, and the mistaken certainty that the Palestinian armed struggle would not strike roots and acquire support from the Palestinians. Put differently, this policy was a surgical attempt of beautifying the ugliness of Israeli colonialism. Ultimately it hopes to present and preserve the Israeli colonial domination of the occupied territories as a fait-accompli.

The rise of Palestinian consciousness, i.e. the development of the Palestinian resistance movement over the past few years forced Israel to undermine its strategy. Israeli policy was predicated on dissoluting or arresting the growth of the Palestinian resistance movement. In this desperate attempt of negating the present historical trend, the Zionists reverted to the usage of 'collective punishment' and 'mass arrests'. Additionally, after the failure of the 1972 municipal elections in Gaza, the military administration assumed all municipal powers in its hands. (These measures helped to undermine the first two points of Israeli strategy.)

In spite of the many attempts to liquidate the resistance and the many setbacks suffered by it, it became obvious that the arduous struggle of the Palestinian people had won international recognition. The Palestinian gun, which the above-mentioned strategy sought to undermine has on the contrary solidified its presence among the masses. Hence a new factor had to be included in this colonial strategy. The new direction was accentuated by Amont Leanan in 'Yediot Aharonot', dated April 15, 1974, when he wrote: «Do we desire that Yassir Arafat alone continues to speak on behalf of the citizens of the territories? The official answer is 'no', and it is of the utmost importance to permit freedom of expression and organization so as to create alternative sources of representatives.»

With the above in mind, the Rabin government set out to establish 'local

authorities' who would oversee the new 'regional autonomy'. *They hoped that their plans would lead to the formation of a 'new' Palestinian leadership that would first undermine and then replace the resistance movement. This plan should be understood as an integral part of the imperialist plan which seeks to liquidate the Palestinian resistance movement.*

The Rabin government entrusted the Ministry of Defense with the search for and, if necessary, creation of, new Palestinian leaders. The minister of Defense, aided by the head of the secret service Shlomo Gazit, who has vast experience on Arab affairs and conditions, and the advisor of the military governor of the West Bank, David Farji, considered to be one of the most astute Israeli officials, contacted a host of Palestinians. Many of the people contacted hold progressive or nationalist views. The Israeli plan is to include well-known Palestinians in their scheme so as to limit the level of opposition by the masses.

The elections of the West Bank come at a time most appropriate for settlements and political retreat. Already Egypt's signing of the Sinai accords essentially means outright recognition of Israel's right to exist as a Zionist entity. Secondly, the resistance movement's preoccupation with the struggle in Lebanon is viewed by imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction as a means through which the resistance would be cut down to size. Already by November 22, 1974 Rabin outlined his strategy which was cited in a special supplement of 'Al-Hamshomer': «The prevailing conditions are not favourable for the establishment of 'regional autonomy' in the occupied territories. This will not take place unless the resistance movement is weakened. Our present task now is to avoid direct interference so as to permit the local silent leadership to seek the essential basis for 'regional autonomy' through its own initiative. Such a development would arise in the context of cooperation with Israel.»

THE BASIC AIM OF THE ELECTIONS:

Israel wants to display to the world that it is the only 'democracy' in the Middle East region, and to prove this it points to the elections that have taken place in the occupied territories. Elections to form rural councils have already taken place in 57 villages and townships of the West Bank. The total membership of the councils is 474, distributed among 57 different rural councils, each of them constituting 8-9 members. As previously mentioned, there are also measures being taken to prepare similar elections in the cities of the West Bank in April 1976.

Israel plans to indicate that the elected officials have emerged as a result of the people's demands through the legality of the ballot box. In Israel's viewpoint the elected officials are the de jure representatives of the people, and not the resistance movement. However, long before the elections, Israel's scheme of 'regional authority' went through various stages. Some of the proposals were:

1) Formation of bodies on the level of governorates. The local dignitaries would participate in them. In addition, new administrative structures would be formed on a regional level and with centralized power. This would replace the present local administrations and unify them into one administrative body in the whole of the West Bank.

2) The rights of the regional administration would include the following:

a. Appointment of West Bank citizens to liason committees in various branches of the military administration. They would be responsible for various sectors: Education, Health, Affairs of the interior; all within the framework of the military administration.
b. Assumption of administrative duties in the existing branches on a gradual basis.
c. Turning over all administrative task in non-military security sectors to the hands of the local population.
d. Assuming some tasks in the civilian sector that are presently in the hands of the military administration.

This program, as previously indicated is to be implemented on a gradual basis. The first priority will be Gaza because there exist already (traitors) leaders willing to cooperate with these Zionist machinations.

In addition to the elections the Israeli leaders took other measures. For example, in the offices of the Colonial administration in the West Bank, General Directors of Arab origin have been appointed. Furthermore there are attempts to convince some Palestinian 'dignitaries' to occupy the posts of military administrators instead of their Zionist counterparts. Apparently, some of them have accepted to be used as tools for the implementation of the enemy's schemes.

These modern techniques and proposals of 'local authority' and 'regional autonomy' are at best measures that attempt to obfuscate the real nature of Zionist colonization. They are modern day euphomisms which seek to hide the intrinsic racist nature of Zionism which relies on exclusivism. On the other hand, the newly elected Palestinian councils have the right to administer their affairs as a colonized people. Such a development is not contradictory to Zionism, on the contrary, it serves Zionism to prolong its life.

It is imperative that all forces recognize the two dimensions of these Zionist schemes and reject them totally. The task of a revolutionary movement is to arm itself with the proper theoretical framework capable of identifying the nature of the existing contradictions and in turn postulating correct solutions. Basil Davidson captures the spirit of this idea in the following: «*Theory, particularly in its strategic and organizational aspects is active in relation to its social base. It actively opposes the evolution of the existing state of affairs and poses revolutionary alternatives, and thus has a necessary autonomous and voluntarist aspect which permits it to articulate the strategy essential for the transition from the present to the desired state of affairs. Types of political practice are premised on revolutionary theory and evaluated in its terms.*» (The Liberation of Guine: Aspects of an African revolution, p. 73.)

Our people's revolt has undermined the enemy's machinations. Armed with the essentials of revolutionary theory they have demonstrated in the streets of West Bank as they clearly indicated their rejection of Zionist colonial rule, be it blessed by elections or not. Armed with such revolutionary fervour our masses will certainly continue to weaken the Zionist enemy.

PFLO FORCES REPELL NEW ATTACKS

For months now there have been continuous attacks on the revolutionary forces of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO). This poses the question of where these attacks would lead to. The strongest attack by the imperialist-reactionary forces (British, Iranian, Jordanian, Omani) took place on October 17, 1975. It was concentrated on the western liberated region of Oman-Dhofar and extended to include territories of the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY).

BACKGROUND TO THE NEW ATTACK:

In August the hireling king of Jordan visited the Shah of Iran, afterwards Qaboos of Oman visited Iran too and discussed with the Shah the Coordination of the three forces (Iran, Jordan, Oman) who enjoy an increasing amount of support from Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. The necessary Arab political coverage for such cooperation against the progressive forces in the area came from the Arab League, which, under Saudi-Egyptian domination has strengthened the Omani regime and ignores completely the presence of the Iranian forces on Arab soil.

THE MILITARY BATTLE:

During October the attacks consisted mainly in bombardements of the liberated zones by long-range field guns and fighter planes. Civilian dwellings were hit. It is noted that usually the military confrontation decreases during the fall season, but the PFLO forces were not surprised by the attack and were able to respond strongly and shell the enemy positions heavily.

More than 100 enemy soldiers were killed or wounded during the first 17 days of October, also prisoners were taken. The anti-aircraft guns of the PFLO forces downed 7 planes—6 helicopters and 1 British airforce Strike Master. One Iranian pilot, Ali Mohammed Ashrafian, was taken prisoner. The enemy leadership admitted heavy losses and claimed that the PFLO forces had obtained new types of arms such as SAM 7 heat-seeking rockets, Katiousha rockets and 81 mm and 82mm mortar guns.

The aim of the imperialist-reactionary forces was to occupy new positions that would enable them to launch more attacks on targets within the liberated zones. The attack was described by one news-agency reporter as follows:

«The government forces of the Sultanate of Oman launched their first military operation of this season against the rebels of the PFLO, who have been fighting for ten years in the south-western region of Oman. Usually every year the battles stop in the month of July when the tropical winds start. Reports from Teheran, Muscat and Aden advise that huge Iranian troops, supported by battleships, air bombers and helicopters have surrounded a coastal area 50 kilometers from the borders of PDRY. The Omani authorities claimed that one of the guerilla strongholds is in that area.»

A spokesman for the PFLO specified the aims of the attack as seeking to gain control of strategic positions that would cut supply routes and important military passages. The attack took place on different areas:

- The southern Omani coast which spreads from the port of Raisot, where Iranian battleships anchor, to Saikout on the east continuing to the borders of PDRY. The aim is to establish permanent positions on this coast.
- The areas bordering PDRY—the aim is to build permanent positions.
- The road from the coastal region to the north, aiming to cut Dhofar into two parts and prevent supplies from reaching the other liberated zones.
- The hills in the north which spread to the desert area on the northern borders.

The spokesman added that the Iranian forces lost from October 1974, when attempts to invade the liberated areas started, till now at least 621 dead, soldiers and officers. He elaborated that the last attacks aim at saving the 'honour and reputation' of the Iranian forces who have failed to achieve the main aim of their presence.

AGGRESSION AGAINST PDRY:

At the same time British bombers and Omani artillery shelled PDRY territory adjoining the borders with Oman. The British General Kenneth Perkins, commander-in-chief of the Omani forces, had previously declared that the situation has changed and that his forces will carry out operations on the borders with the PDRY, and that in 1976 they will limit their operations to the border area «if the PDRY does not decrease its support for the rebels.» This is indicative of the plans against the progressive regime in the PDRY.

While the attacks of the imperialist-reactionary forces escalate, the Arab regimes more than ever adopt a policy of silence. Qaboos is becoming more prominent in the 'Gulf security' policy which aims at liquidating the revolutionary forces in the region to complete U.S. imperialism domination of the Middle East.

PEOPLES FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF OMAN

LIST OF OPERATIONS FROM AUGUST, 19—OCT. 10, 1975

101 operations—attacks, shelling and sniping

ENEMY LOSSES

625 killed or wounded—Iranian, British and other mercenary soldiers.
Destruction of 360 defense-positions.
2 planes—Jaguar—shot down.
8 planes—fighters—shot down or hit.
7 helicopters —shot down or hit.
11 artillery gun positions—silenced.
Capture of 60 mm artillery guns.
Destruction of 7 big machine-guns.
Destruction of 7 short-wave radiosets.
Capture of 1 short-wave radio.
Destruction of 3 ammunition depots.
Destruction of an observation position.
Destruction of 2 armoured cars.
Destruction of 6 military vehicles.
Capture of an Iranian pilot—First Lieutenant.
Seizure of arms and medicines.
Fires and explosions in enemy positions—14 times.

PFLO LOSSES

7 comrades martyred.
2 citizens killed and 3 children wounded.

CONFESSIONALISM IN THE LEBANESE CONSTITUTION

The present clashes in Lebanon are a result of a conflict between two main forces—the reactionaries who are trying to safeguard the existing confessional system that governs Lebanon, and the national and progressive forces, who are demanding certain changes in this system. One of the demands concern the electoral law of Lebanon which is based on a confessional basis. To the Phalangists and their allies, the present law is one of the guarantees that insure the continuation of their domination of the Lebanese Parliament and thus, the government and the regime.

To understand the confessional representation in the Lebanese Parliament, it is necessary to take a look at the Lebanese Constitution, for it is the constitution which makes it possible for the electoral laws to determine the seats according to religions and sects.

The constitution of Lebanon was established in 1925. Although it was established by a group of Lebanese intellectuals who were appointed for this task by the parliament, the constitution had its main titles put in Paris by French officials; whereas the committee in Lebanon was only capable to take what it needed from the French constitution. Since then, the French constitution has been replaced more than once. Two main characteristics describe the period when the Lebanese constitution was put.

1) The constitution was put when Lebanon was under French colonialism. As such, it came to satisfy the wishes of the colonizing authorities as regards their anticipations for the future of Lebanon. Although the constitution has been amended more than once, these amendments never changed any controversial points. The major amendments were done in 1943, when Lebanon received its independence. These omitted all articles that determined the relations with the colonialist country and its authorities.

2) At the time the constitution was put, Lebanon was closer economically, socially and politically to Syria. Both countries were under French colonialism. Syria has since replaced its constitution with a new one that fits the developments that have taken place since then. The national struggle in Syria has always contained the necessity of achieving a democratic constitution.

The Lebanese constitution still exists as the French colonialists wished it to be and as Michel Chiha, the secretary of the committee which wrote the constitution, planned it to be. Chiha, by the way, was one of the first people that the Phalangists Party looked upon for guidance in its early years. As such, the Lebanese regime is a confessional one not only through the expressions of its bourgeoise leadership, but through its constitution which forces the society under it to act in a confessional way when it has to do with government work, which is often. The constitution and the legal articles that the regime stands on, are based upon certain sociological propositions. Some of these are:

1) *National formation* is not composed of a number of individual citizens tied to their homeland, or of certain social classes brought together for mutual interests; *it is composed of certain religions and sects within these religions. «The Lebanese people are composed of religious groups» according to the first Lebanese government after independence.*

2) *Each religious group has its autonomy* (this includes internal and external affairs), *and as such it has its own structure and institutions.*

3) The coexistence of these groups on a common land necessitates the coordination of their relationship in a way that safeguards the interest of each group on all levels while preserving the character of each.

4) *This situation is to continue as it is, and the composition is not to achieve a social community through integration of the different sects or religions.*

5) The membership of the religions and the sects recognized is constant. The position of each of these sects is also a constant one in the pyramidical build-up of the «national setting». This reflects itself on the share each sect will receive in the public life of Lebanon.

6) Thus, it is proposed that all Lebanese citizens are members of a certain religion; all Lebanese are believers of one of these religions: Christianity, Islam or Judaism. There is no room in the system for non-believers, atheists, or members of other religions like Buddism, Hinduism or others.

7) That the system regulates the lives of all individuals on the public or private level through the confessional propositions.

8) That Lebanon exists as an entity on this basis. If this basis is lost, then the destiny of Lebanon as an entity is put into question.

According to these propositions, the Lebanese system exist. Realizing its shortcomings, the confessional leaders who adopted these points tried to hide behind certain theoretical points that aimed to cover up the nature of the regime. These were:

1) Lebanon is the center of Christian-Moslem dialogue and inter-relations.

2) Lebanon is the world's example for coexistence between religious minorities.

3) The guarantee of democracy for all, and Lebanon being a bridge between the east and the west.

All of the above-mentioned propositions and theoretical excuses were well expressed in the Lebanese constitution, its by-laws and legal articles.

Before going further in the details of the articles of the constitution, it is important to remind the reader again that this article does not aim to go into the social, economic or political background of the Lebanese system; but it is essential to note that these factors are basic in understanding the confessional system as an expression of the interest of the feudalists and other oppressing classes.

There are two documents that crystalize the confessional nature of the Lebanese constitution. The other articles or documents were derived from these two. The first is the constitution and the other is Ordinance 60/LR.

FIRST: THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution contains three basic principles:

1) *The people of Lebanon belong to religious sects. Each sect has its own rules regarding personal statute and its religious interests. Both are protected by the state.*

2) *Each sect has full rights to develop its own educational institutions.*

3) *The representation of each sect in public offices and the cabinet is subject to the supremacy of law and national unity.*

As such we see that Lebanon is not a secular state as claimed; but on the contrary, it subjects the state to the religious comprehension and beliefs, and grants the religious institutions certain benefits and privileges. The theocratic state is not necessarily the state that adopts one religion only, but it is the State that allows religion to interfere in the affairs of government and gives religion a favorable position. As such, the Lebanese constitution is not a secular constitution.

ORDINANCE NO. 60/LR:

Specifying the number of sects was done through ordinance No. 60/LR, which was issued in 1936 by the French governor of Lebanon at that time. This ordinance affirmed what came in the constitution regarding religions and their authorities over the personal statutes of their congregations. But Article 5 of the ordinance stated: «Lebanese citizens who do not belong to any of the recognized sects or those who do not belong to any sect will be subject to the civil law.» This civil law which was mentioned in the ordinance has not until now been discussed by the Lebanese authorities or parliament. It simply does not exists.

THE PARLIAMENT:

The constitution which was adopted in 1926 stated that Parliament's members would be elected on the basis of sects' representation. But this was amended in 1947 to state that Parliament would be constituted from members belonging to the recognized sects. The number of the Parliament and the way they will be elected will be according to the by-laws concerned with this topic. The by-laws adopted in 1960 by the Lebanese Parliament determined that the Parliament will be of 99 members distributed to the sects as following:

30 Maronites (Christians)
20 Sunnis (Moslems)
19 Shi'te (Moslems)
11 Orthodox (Christians)
6 Druze (Moslems)
6 Roman Catholics (Christians)
4 Armenian Orthodox (Christians)
1 Armenian Catholic (Christian)
1 Christian Minorities
1 Protestant (Christian)

From a total of 99, 54 are Christians and 45 are Moslems. This ratio is the same one of 6 to 5 in favour of Christians which was adopted in 1943 in what is known as the national charter agreed upon by the bourgeoise Moslem and Christian leaders of Lebanon. This ratio does not limit itself to the Parliament, but extends to the cabinet and to all the public sectors of Lebanon. The distribution of positions reaches even the leadership of the Army where the highest ranking officers and the positions they hold depend on what sect each officer belongs to.

Thus, the Lebanese constitution is based on confessionalism and needs a radical substitute in order to transform, least of all, the constitution and its by-laws to become secular, hence having a positive reflection on the citizens of Lebanon. Although it is the role of the Lebanese masses to carry out such a task, the position of the national and progressive movement which is supposed to lead these masses, falls short of demanding this necessary radical change.

The national and progressive movement has concentrated its demands to the electoral law. Such a change is limited and will not eliminate the confessional basis of the regime. It will only result in a quantitative change regarding the number of seats the national and progressive movement could gain in the elections. The program of the national and progressive movement proposes the elections to be held on the following basis:

The electoral law should be changed and replaced by one that adopts the percentage system on one national list. As such, all of Lebanon will be one election district, and all the voters will vote for one list or another instead of being limited to their election district. Such a change will unify the progressive forces and give them a relatively higher percentage than they receive now. Under the present law, the contest is based on a relative majority which gives the winners all the seats of the district.

The issue of the Lebanese constitution and its electoral laws are not separated from the overall nature oft he forces that exist in Lebanon and that made it possible for such a constitution to outlive its origin—the French Constitution. As such, when calling for changes, it must always be held that it is necessary to create the alternative forces that are not ready to abide by confessionalism and all its expressions.

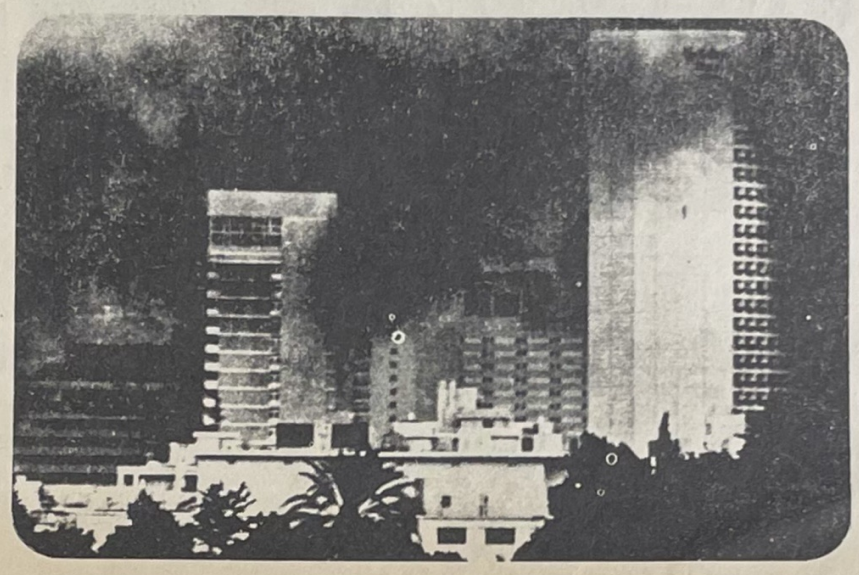
LEBANESE NATIONAL CRISIS - A BACKGROUND

Contemporary history of Lebanon clearly shows that any major crisis in Lebanon has two factors that make it. These factors are not necessarily on the same degree of importance, but both exist in a dialectical relationship that increase the level of contradictions and the expressions of these contradictions—quantity of arms, presence of foreign troops and economic and material support. These make it possible for the, conflicting parties to outdo their natural or local capabilities and to prolong the clashes. These two factors are:

1) *The role of international powers in controlling and moving local forces. The role determined by the international forces for the local one does not concern Lebanon only but is directed towards other forces in the region.*
An example of that is Britain's and France's roles during the 19th century. When Mohamed Ali, the modern ruler of Egypt at that time, tried to expand his influence over the Arab East (Palestine, Syria and Lebanon), Britain and France supported the anti-Arabism forces in Lebanon and organized them to fight Mohamed Ali's advancing troops. As such, Mohamed Ali failed to achieve his dreams of building a strong empire that would challenge the western countries interests in the Middle East. Britain and France succeeded to enter the region and to safeguard many interests, the most important of which was a safe way to India and the Far East.
2) Such a role of international forces would not have been possible if there were not local contradictions—those contradictions which explode due to historical developments of social, economic and political conditions are usually ripe and ready to cause a radical change in the Lebanese society.

But the integration of local contradictions with those of the region, under external forces pressure, alter the true nature of the conflict and force it to undermine the possible positive results of the masses movement.

When during the 19th century, particularly between 1840-1860, the peasants uprising in nortern Lebanon did not take its natural dimension against the feudalist landlords, France and Britain interfered to throw in the conflict a new factor; that is, the possibility of dividing Lebanon into several countries under the Ottoman Empire. The uprising of the peasants had little chance of success when western armies were roaming the beaches of Lebanon. The colonialist forces were capable of aborting the peasant movement by destroying the agricultural economy, turning part of these peasants and the population of the area to merchants who were subservient to the international colonialist forces' trade, and making these peasants relatively favoured on the political level vis-



à-vis the peasants and population of southern Lebanon. Such developments instigated by the western forces radically changed the nature of the conflict—which was basically, a class one. Confessionalism gained momentum when such relative benefits to some of the peasants and the transformation of others to merchants could only be given through the alliance of the Christian Maronite Church with the French authorities.

These same two factors—the external one and the internal—can be clearly detected in the clashes of 1958 in Lebanon. Certainly the demands, manifestations, expressions and methods used in each national crisis is different due to the changes of time. But what is not changed is the fact that external forces played a major role in the course of the clashes of 1958 to the extent that the U.S. Government under Eisenhower sent marines and troops to Lebanon to safeguard the existence of the then regime. Before identifying how these factors developed them, and how they influenced the causes and results of the clashes, it is necessary to take a look at the situation of the region and Lebanon at that time.

During the years of 1950, the Arab masses witnessed the rise of Nasserism as an anti-imperialist movement. Until 1955, Nasserism was relatively limited to Egypt, but after the tripartite aggression of 1956 against Egypt, the Arab masses saw Nasser as the champion of Arab liberation and progress.

Imperialist plans in the area at that time were to establish regional pacts that would suppress national movements under the cover of fighting communism When Nasser refused the idea and became the leader of the struggle against such pacts, imperialism pursued its aim by trying to develop other leaders as a substitute to Nasser. The Arab masses escalated their struggle, and the Algerian revolution scored more and more victories towards independence. One of the regimes that stood against Nasser and allied itself with imperialism was the Lebanese one under the presidency of Cameel Chamoun (presently Minister of Interior).

The U.S. wanted the Lebanese regime to be a model of the so-called western «democratic» regimes in the area. It supplied Lebanon with huge amounts of economic and material help. This widened the class contradictions between the bourgeois class and the oppressed classes who associated themselves with the national and social achievements, in Egypt and Syria. (The two countries were then unified under Nasser's leadership). *The dominant issue was the national one, and the leadership of the forces who opposed Chamoun were of the traditional Lebanese politicians, most of whom are still dominant in present-day Lebanese politics.* To a large extent, these leaders were considered to be of the Nasserite line and depended on Nasserism to gain the support of the masses.

When the contradictions between the Arab national forces and imperialism escalated, the imperialist forces tried to strengthen their presence in Lebanon through repressive measures of the regime. In 1958, the following major events took place in the Arab countries:

1) Syria and Egypt unified under Nasser's leadership establishing the United Arab Republic.
2) A coup d'état ended the reactionary regime in Iraq.
3) A coup d'état in Sudan brought to the regime leadership close to Nasser

These developments weakened the imperialist presence in the region. Two regimes were threatened to loose their existence—the Lebanese one and the Jordanian one. As a result, American troops were sent to Lebanon while British troops were sent to Jordan.

As such, the conflict of 1958 was not limited to local forces, but was a conflict between the Arab liberation forces and imperialism. Lebanon became the area of a direct clash between the two forces manifesting themselves in local armed groups. The Army took a neutral position. American troops which landed in Lebanon were concerned with: 1) to keep the regime of Chamoun from falling; 2) to set an example as to the possibility of American intervention in other areas.

This external interference set a limit to the results that the pro-Nasserite forces can come out with. It also overshadowed the internal causes of the conflict.

These internal conflicts can be summarized into two points:

1) The demand by the oppressed classes for certain social demands that guarantee a minimum income for the workers and the establishment of social security.
2) A bigger share in the decision-making of the regime for the pro-Nasser (traditional Lebanese leaders) forces, which were at the same time the majority of the Moslem traditional politicians.

Regarding the first point, the bourgeois leadership of the rebelling forces in Lebanon was satisfied to be given a share of the growing business in Lebanon. As for the demands for social security and minimum wages, they were shelved aside to be studied by committees. These demands were only achieved in the latter part of the 60's—by then they were not enough to satisfy such research was incapable of dealing with the problems radically. Social security was achieved along with minimum the national and progressive movement which had changed in character and class structure. Thus, the only benefit on the economic level was in the interest of the Moslem bourgeois class and not the oppressed classes, the majority of whom are Moslems.

The Moslem bourgeoisie was also capable of gaining more say in the regime's affairs. The Prime Minister of Lebanon, who is agreed upon to be a Moslem, came to be appointed according to consultations with traditional Moslem leaders. The Prime Minister began to play a role complimentary to the President instead of being subservient to him. On the other hand, the President of Lebanon, who is agreed upon to be a Christian Maronite, came to be chosen with consent and agreement of the National Arab regimes, particularly Egypt and to a lesser degree Syria (after it broke off from the United Arab Republic).

The real meaning of this new formula is that it affirmed the confessional nature of the regime. Instead of demanding the abolishment of distributing posts according to religion, the post 1958 era strengthened it. What concerned the Arab national forces was to keep the regime from being hostile to Nasser's line in the Arab countries. Thus after 1958, the Lebanese regime never took an anti-Nasser stand in the Arab conflicts, although it took neutral positions many times.

Continued on P. 16

SADAT,

THE SINAI ACCORDS – ON THE ROAD TO TOTAL CAPITULATION

«The state is . . . a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonism which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonism, these classes with conflicting economic interests might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power, seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power arisen out of a society but placing itself above it and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state.»
ENGELS, *THE ORIGIN OF THE FAFILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY, AND STATE.*

The most recent Sinai Accords have been viewed by the Arab masses as treacherous and capitulating to imperialist interests in the Middle East. These new developments require us to go beyond the easily observable facts so as to probe into the historical and class conditions of Egypt. Was Egypt's signing of these accords an aberration or an expression of the actual class contradictions i.e. class composition underpinning the power of the state. The quote from Engels clearly indicates that the state arises when class contradictions are irreconcilable, «Conversely the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable.» (LENIN; THE STATE AND THE REVOLUTION, Collected Works, Vol. 25, p. 387).

With the signing of these accords Sadat has attained a political solution terminating the condition of war with the Zionist enemy, and terminating the political-economic encirclement previously imposed on Israel. The adjoining results are: A) increasing U.S. penetration of the Middle East; B) undermining the right of the Palestinians to self-determination; C) recognition of Israel's right to exist as a Zionist (racist) entity; extricating Egypt from the Arab front. This is a result of the class-view and basis of the state. In the meantime Israel continues to receive large amounts of U.S. weapons: Several dozen F-15 fighter bombers, at least 100 Lance medium-range missiles, 1000 laser bomb modification kits, and several hundred F-16 fighter bombers, which will in 1980 replace the A-4 Skyhawks, and F-4 Phantoms.

Furthermore the New York Times indicated only days before the signing of the accords, that the upcoming agreement will: «. . .allow the United States to penetrate the Arab World, enlarging American political, economic and military influence and protecting the flow of oil to the West.» (August 27, 1975)

Before the signing of the agreement the U.S. was cognizant that Sadat needed certain tangible results to justify his pro-U.S. stance. The New York Times astutely commented: «Washington views the political and economic situation in Cairo as so precarious that Mr. Sadat needs to show movement towards regaining lost territory to prove his pro-American policies are producing results.» (June 18, 1975).

These events require us to develop a keen and thorough understanding of the unfolding historical process in the Arab countries, based on a clear knowledge of the class composition of the Arab right-wing. To do so, we must first develop an overview of general trends before we focus on Egypt and the broader implications of the Sinai Accords.

RESURGENCE OF THE ARAB RIGHT-WING:

If the June war of 1967 marked the historical defeat of the petit-bourgeois military bureaucracies, the October war of 1973 has marked the resurgence of the unholy alliance—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the U.S. and its local client Israel. The prevailing trends and developments in the Middle East aim at the redrawing of the map of the Arab East so as to place it within the orbit of American global strategy. What are the major characteristics of the prevailing historical trends in the Arab Middle East?

Put succinctly, there is a bourgeois reactionary upsurge in the Arab world Since 1967, the historical arch-rivals, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, have joined the same team, and in the process a new alliance combining Egypt's political, intellectual and historical authority with Saudi Arabia's vast oil wealth has emerged. Furthermore, Iran's wealth and military strength are finding a comfortable position in the newly emerged alliance.

The rise of this right-wing axis of power has been predicated on the dissolution of Arab progressivism. In view of the results of the October War, this new reactionary axis has sought to resolve the so-called Middle East conflict by overtly identifying national policy with imperialist interests in the region. To do so, all necessary measures have been taken, and are being taken to stem the tide of revolution and to forge the capitalist road of development. In addition, this new right-wing axis is convinced that a settlement with Israel is a must so as to thwart radical developments in the Arab East and the Arab Gulf. In brief, an attempt is being made to reverse a half century of Arab anti-colonialism and to install a new order in the Mideast which requires for its implementation the abortion of the «national democratic» phase of the revolution; the sanctification of regionalism in the Arab world;[1] the abandonment of the vision of one Arab socialist state. *The struggle of the past quarter of a century by the Arab nationalist movement to obtain true independence is being thwarted by a right-wing alliance under the aegis of the U.S., whose ideology is inspired by the rejuvenation of religious fundamentalism based on upper-class populist perspectives, under-pinned by an alliance of the possessing classes and their ennuchs within each state; and externally endorsed and safeguarded by the continued presence of Israel in the Arab midst and the increasing penetration and domination of the U.S. in the region.*

Whereas the promotion of the Arab national interest in the past took place within the ambit of three spheres: Arab, African and Islamic, that world is being supplanted by a world-view predicated on Islam, capitalism and the West. The class alliance upon which state power was based has evolved into a new alliance: military bureaucrats, restored feudalists and a nascent bourgeoisie who depend on the infusion of oil capital and the penetration of imperialist capital in countries such as Egypt and Syria.

To cement the above, U.S. military sales in the first 10 months of the fiscal year 1975 amounted to $2.4 billion to Iran, and $1.1 billion to Saudi Arabia. In the meantime, Kuwait's purchase increased to $365 million from the $18 million of 1974.[2] As a precautionary measure, the U.S. maintains a sizeable number of military experts (advisors) 2,249 in Saudi Arabia, and 1,207 in Iran.[3]

«OPEN DOOR» POLICY: PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT

With the June War the U.S. attained a major goal: the defeat of Nasserism. Since then its strategy has been based on the consolidation of Israel as a regional power, the denasserization of the Arab world in collaboration with the regionalists (Faisal), and the elimination of the Palestinian liberation movement along with the Arab nationalist forces; and, the arming and supporting of new powers: Iran as the regional super-power and Saudi Arabia the new peninsular power.

As Sadat's policy became fully and overtly identified with these forces, new internal and external changes had to be ushered in, i.e. the «Open Door» Policy. This policy is essentially an important segment of the so-called «peaceful settlement.»

The significance of the «Open Door» Policy is in the changes it seeks to accomplish. We have already mentioned the ideological turn to the right accompanied by its fundamentalist Islamic dimension. However, the two major features of this policy are:

1. The encouragement and development of the private sector.
2. Importation and penetration of imperialist capital.

As regards the first, the People's Assembly of Egypt on July 23, 1975 included in its report the following:[4]

a. Before an external open door policy is invoked, an internal one must result in the freeing of the private sector.
b. Transfer of some public capital into private capital.
c. Establishment of investment firms which are immune from taxation.
d. The enactment of laws preventing the nationalization of local capital.

In another session of the People's Assembly the following was enacted: a) A minimum increase of 25% in land rent (land rented by the middle and poor farmers); b) The land-owner is empowered with the right to evict the renter in case of a delay in the payment.[5] On

the 15th of June 1975, the conference for the investment of capital in Egypt agreed to reconsider the inclusion of workers in the worker's councils since they have not produced the desired goals.[6] In addition, the system of profit sharing for the workers has been eliminated. These measures are steps towards the consolidation and strengthening of private capital.

However, the conditions of the majority of the population are in a never ending process of decline. Whereas 10% of the population consumes 45% of total production, the remaining 90% consume 55%. The bottom 34% of the population acquires 11% of the national income, while the top 5% receives 22%.[7] On another level, former feudalists or large landowners are finding their way into key positions of the state apparatus.[8]

These changes have been accompanied by the move to the right on the part of the upper echelons of the national bourgeoisie. In particular, such a transformation is occurring amidst the sectors which are engaged in export-import, tourism, heavy industry, and of course the landowners. The class composition of the regime is changing, and the progressive elements are rapidly being purged. The mentality underlying such developments is witnessing the demise of Arab unity and the resurgence of a right-wing front—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iran.

As to the process of the importation and penetration of imperialist capital in Egypt and the Arab countries, it is preceeding at various levels. In spite of the increases in oil prices and revenues, the nature of imperialist capital permits the expropriation of vast profits, hence increasing the imperialist surplus-value. For example, Ford Motors is negotiating a contract to establish a branch in Egypt. The plan includes the importation of all machinery and parts as finished products; the Egyptian worker is to assemble the parts with the assistance of U.S experts.

In general, the Arab countries are advancing substantial support to the western economies via the great expansion in the importation of capital and consumer goods, of modern technology, and of defense requirements. Yousef Sayegh concludes: «This in itself serves as a strong impetus to the western economies and a redeeming factor for the strained balances of payments.»[9] In addition, the over celebrated «Open Door» Policy on the economic level emphasizes a framework of dependent development. Such a framework imposes a division of labour whereby the advanced capitalist countries continue to expropriate the wealth of the underdeveloped country. For example, most trade agreements or loans have specific conditions imposed upon them. The latest U.S. deal involving $144 million dictates that half of the amount is to be used in the purchase of wheat and the other half for the purchase of U.S. made goods and commodities.[10]

The course persued by the Arab leadership is one that reinforces the development of underdevelopment. Dos Santos in his «Structure of Dependence» summarizes the process in the following:

> *«We can understand what is happening in the underdeveloped countries only when we see that they develop within the framework of a process of dependent production and reproduction. This system is a dependent one because it reproduces a productive system whose development is limited by those world relations which necessarily lead to the development of only certain economic sectors, to trade under unequal conditions to domestic competition with international capital under unequal conditions, to the imposition of relations of superexploitation of the domestic labor force with a view of dividing the economic surplus thus generated between internal and external forces of domination.»*[11]

More generally, on a broader Arab level, the «Open Door» Policy does not signify a plan for industrialization. On the contrary, Arab leaders (of both oil and non-oil producing nations) are content to import technological assistance, but they are too short-sighted to establish the economic-material basis of a long-range program that would insure development-industrialization. This process, which has resulted in the resurgence of the right-wing in the Arab countries in direct alliance and compliance with imperialist strategy, has required that the right-wing attack and hence diminish the Soviet presence in the region. In addition, to propel the internal dynamics of the system, repressive measures are invoked to silence and to ultimately liquidate the progressive forces. In this context, the 'peaceful settlement' has been posited.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SINAI ACCORDS:

The basic reasons for the failure of Kissinger's spring peace offensive (March 1975) were highlighted by Haaretz of March 24, 1975. They maintained that the Egyptian position caused the breakdown of the talks because: «they did not agree to Israel's demand of: terminating the condition of war, determining an acceptable time-period for the agreement, appointing joint forces to oversee and guarantee that force will not be used.» Furthermore, the Israeli government had agreed to certain guidelines as stipulations for any agreement. They were summarized by an Israeli newspaper on June 11, 1975 in the following:

1. A political alternative must be found for any Israeli withdrawal, hence for each territory that Israel withdraws from there must be a political price;
2. An agreement is possible if Sadat is willing to pay the price;
3. Withdrawal of the demand to terminate the conditions of war, on condition that the time period of the emergency forces be prolonged 3-4 years;
4. Establishment of demilitarized zones, in addition to the rejuvenation of the U.N. task force;
5. Non-attachment of the agreement to the condition of the other fronts;
6. Termination of the Arab Economic boycott of Israel by Egypt;
7. Freedom of navigation for Israeli vessels in the Suez canal;
8. Limiting the pressures applied by Egypt on the African and third world countries to prevent them from establishing relations with Israel.»

Practically, the accords resulted in major political-economic gains for Israel and the U.S. They can be summarized in the following points:

A. Increasing U.S. penetration in the Middle East region.

B. Direct U.S. presence in the region as exemplified through the forthcoming American 'tecnical experts'. *Time* magazine of September 8, 1975 asserts that there is only one school whereby these 'experts' will obtain their training, namely the military academy. During the Vietnam war the Pentagon trained not only its team of experts but those of the C.I.A. Moreover, the state department does not expect to confront a shortage in the applicants to the jobs, that open the gates to the magic of the world of electronics, radar and spying satelites.

C. Agreement was reached to not use force, and to revert to diplomatic means in confronting Israel.

D. The weakening of the Syrian and Palestinian position due to the silencing of the Egyptian front for the duration of the agreement—3 years.

E. Neutralizing Egypt from the efforts of isolating Israel internationally.

F The political nature of the agreement includes a de facto recognition of Israel.

G. Israel maintains military positions overlooking the Sinai passes. The amount of territory it has withdrawn from is minimal, and Egypt's military position is weak or not enviable in case of the outbreak of new fighting.

Briefly, the Sinai accords have unquestionably enhanced imperialist-Zionist penetration of the Middle East. The question that begs for an answer however is, why and upon what basis did Sadat agree to these conditions?

In the first part of this article we presented a partial answer. We can deduce from it that objectively Israel is protected by Arab reaction. The latter insures Israel's protection through the strikes and blows it deals to any development of the progressive forces, and through its reliance on the political-economic conditions and stipulations of imperialism.

THE OBJECTIVE MEANING OF CAPITULATION:

If national liberation is predicated on the freeing of the national productive forces from imperialist domination, then present developments in Egypt are a living negation of national liberation. The present predicament of the Egyptian bourgeoisie is one of resolving its contradiction with imperialism. The resolution of this contradiction can occur only at a specific stage of te bourgeoisie's development, namely of its demise. The bourgeoisie in the past had to function within the framework of a socialized 'state-capitalist' system. The new doctrine being applied is the restoration of free-enterprise mechanisms which in turn revive direct western market influence on Egyptian economic decisions. This is leading to the disintegration of the social control of the mechanism of state capitalism, which should gradually be replaced by the spontaneous market-control laws. Can this new orientation correct the structural distortions inherited from the colonial area? There are no accurate data with which to assess these recent developments, however we must keep in mind that Egypt is venturing on to a new course with an already established international market dominated by imperialist capital. The laws of the market already accentuate profitability as the sole criterion for investment choices. Foreign capital will encourage the sectors which are capable of meeting the competitive scale of the world-market. Whereas the local bourgeoisie will opt for quick profit-making schemes based primarily on speculative adventures.

The socio-economic structures which were distorted as a result of the peripheral development of Egypt will encounter conditions that will accentuate more uneveness in the development of the various sectors of the economy. This policy has already resulted in the deepening of Egypt's economic crises, hence increased its reliance on imperialist capital. Confronted with such a predicament the bourgeoisie through the state must introduce qualificative changes in its political outlook. *The sum total of this change in the final analysis incorporates the basic components of capitulation. Briefly then, capitulation is: 1) Relinquishing the political-economic independence of the Arab nation; 2) Disowing the Palestinian cause; 3) Non-confrontation of the political-economic interests of imperialism in the region; 4) Developing an organic relationship with the forces of reaction so as to intensify the campaign to eliminate the forces of progress. All these developments are necessary political-economic pre-requisites for imperialism to exploit the resources of the region and in particular oil. These developments are underpinned by the recognition of Zionism's right to exist, which is at the expense of the national rights of the Palestinian people.*

Within this ideological and historical incubator we can identify two diametrically opposed political orientations in the context of the liberation of Palestine. The first is dependent on imperialism so that it would acquire a limited amount of its occupied territories, whereas the other wages a true anti-imperialist struggle with the vision of liberating the occupied lands as a direct form of the negation of imperialism and its penetration. The former expresses the class interests of the Egyptian and the Arab bourgeoisie, who offer their services to imperialism in their capacity of Junior Partners. The latter however, personifies the true interests of the Arab masses.

THE CORRECT POSITION:

Sadat and the Arab right-wing claim that such settlements are not final. Indeed they are correct, but the next step of their scheme will accelerate the process of imperialist penetration, which will force him to succumb even further.

Many forces in the Arab world have expressed their reservations of Sadat's acquiescence to imperialist demands. This however is not sufficient. The inadequacy or inacceptability of Sadat's position does not emanate from its failure of getting a good deal. On the contrary, rejection and opposition of Sadat's policy is based on the fact that national liberation requires a totally different strategy to attain its goal, a position which we have consistently maintained. It requires a political, economic, social, moral and military preparedness whose development could not only undermine but negate the interests of the bourgeoisie, hence it postulates direct and prolonged military confrontation with Zionism and imperialism.

In short, it is not sufficcient to oppose the Sinai peace accords, but we must reject the class-underpinnings of such a capitulationist settlement Sadat's latest accord has left no room for the previous rhetorical discussions about the possibilities of «Patriotic Settlement». On the contrary the present situation requires that all revolutionary forces declare with all clarity their opposition to all imperialist reactionary settlements, to U.N resolutions 242, 338, and their affiliates, including the Geneva conference.

If our task is to liberate Palestine, it is necessary that we cling to revolutionary ideology. In PFLP BULLETIN No. 15 Jan.-Feb. 75, we wrote: «The crucial test which determines a movement's re-

PERSECUTION OF PEOPLE OF JEW

By Benjamin Merhav

PART II :THE MURDER OF 800,000 "DRY BRANCHES" OF HUNGARY

This is Part II of Benjamin Merhav's article on the characters of Zionism. In this part, Comrade Merhav exposes the Zionist position and attitude towards Jewish massacres on Nazi hands and the collaboration role that was played by the Zionist leaders. He takes Hungary during World War II as an example.

«Kastner spoke in detail of the situation, saying «the Hungarian Jew was a branch which long ago dried up on the tree.» This vivid description coincides with the testimony of another witness about the Hungarian Jews, 'This was a big Jewish community in Hungary, without any ideological Jewish backbone'. (Moshe Shaweigner, a Kastner aide in Budapest; Protocol p. 465)». From the Judgement by Shlomo Cheshin, Judge of Israel's Supreme Court, 17.1. 1958. (In Appeal of the Attorney General on Criminal Case No. 124 of 1953, the Attorney General of Israel vs. Malchiel Greenwald, D.C. Jerusalem).

PART II: THE MURDER OF 800.000 «DRY BRANCHES» OF HUNGARY

The above quotation from a judge of the supreme court of Israel proves that people of Jewish background who refuse to support Zionism have always been despised by Zionism to such an extent that the Zionist would rather have them murdered rather than regard them as fellow human beings. They are—according to Zionism—«dry branches» on the tree of the «Jewish nation.» Since the majority of Europe's Jews were not Zionist they had to be fed to the Nazi murder machine. If «pruning» the tree of the «Jewish nation» can prolong and even enhance its chances to grow, then «dry branches»—even if they are millions of innocent human beings—must be destroyed. This is where Zionist «morality» begins. This where it ends too, as the following report shows.

1. *The Course of Events*

In March 1944 the Nazis took direct control of Hungary, and the place of their friend Horthy was taken by a personal representative of Hitler, who registered immediately the support of the local fascist thugs. By that time the Nazi armies suffered defeats on all fronts and were retreating before the heroic Red Army. Only a handful of Nazi units were available now for Hungary. The Hitlerite murder machine was now gearing itself to its last «tasks» in Hungary. The top Gestapo «experts» on mass murder were sent immediately to Budapest to carry out, amongst others, the mass murder of almost one million Jewish Hungarians. The top Nazi murder-experts were Eichmann and three Gestapo colonels: Becher, Krumey and Von Wisliczeny.

The Nazi war criminals didn't waste much time and immediately contacted the local Zionist leaders. «In obediance to Himmler's directive»—recalled Eichmann years later—«I now concentrated on negotiations with the Jewish political official in Budapest. . . among them Dr. Rudolf Kastner, authorised representative of the Zionist movement. This Dr. Kastner was a young man about my age, an ice-cold lawyer and a fanatical Zionist. *He agreed to help keep the Jews from resisting deportation* (to the gas chambers of Auschwitz)—*and even keep order in the collection camps*—if I would close my eyes and 1st a few hundreds of a few thousands young Jews emigrate illegally to Palestine. It was a good bargain. . . With his great polish and reserve he would have made an ideal Gestapo officer himself.» (from «Life» magazine Nov. 28 and Dec 5, 1960.)

So, as a result of that particular Nazi-Zionist deal alone, and with the full knowledge and approval of the top Zionist leadership in Palestine and the U.S.A., 800,000 Jewish Hungarians were murdered within a few months in exchange for the «rescue» of the local Zionist leaders, their families and rich friends, altogether, 1,685 persons.

> *«I was able to give Hungarian Zionist leaders three weeks notice»— recalled in 1961 a Jewish survivor for Auschwitz— «that Eichmann planned to send a million of their Jews to his gas chambers. . . Kastner went to Eichmann and told him «I know of your plans; spare some Jews of my choice and I shall keep quiet... Kastner paid Eichmann several thousand dollars. With this little fortune, Eichmann was able to buy his way to freedom when Germany collapsed, to set himself up in the Argentine...» (from the memoirs of Dr. R. Verba, published in February 1961 in the London «Daily Herald.»)*

The full details of the Nazi-Zionist deal in Hungary were unexpectedly revealed and proven before a district court in Jerusalem in Criminal Case No. 124 of 1953 where the Israeli government through its attorney general instituted a criminal libel suit against a Jewish immigrant from Hungary, Mr. M. Greenwald, accusing him of «criminally libeling Dr. Rudolf Kastner, spokesman for the Trade and Industry Minister of Israel» etc. «with the intention to defame the aforesaid. . .» So, it was the old Hungarian Jews defending himself against the state of Israel. Greenwald's crime was that he dared to expose Zionist collaboration with the Nazis.

Kastner never lost the backing of the top Zionist leaders. Not until the exposure during the trial of the Nazi-Zionist collaboration outraged public opinion and threatened the stability of the Zionist regime. Only then, following the exposure of the Zionist crimes in the District court and pending an appeal to Israel's Supreme court, Kastner was secretly murdered by the Zionist gestapo. Greenwald won his case by proving the truth of most of his accusations. But the Zionist regime saved itself by «getting rid» of the man whom it initially set out to defend.

One of the major findings of the district court, which was later approved by all 5 judges of the appeal, was that Kastner «in a perjurious and criminal way» saved Kurt Becher, a major Nazi war criminal, from the punishment awaiting him in Nuremberg.

2. *Savinn Nazi War Criminals*

Let us take a close look at the details of that court finding.

The Gestapo colonel Kurt Becher, now one of the richest men in West Germany «distinguished» himself as a member of the Nazi Death corps (which specialised in mass murder of Jews in Poland) so much that he was promoted to become liason officer between Hitler and Himmler (the Gestapo Chief), and he was to get further promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General in 1945, following his «success» in Hungary, and to be appointed «special Reichs Commissar» in charge of all concentration camps in Nazi occupied Europe.

Following the defeat of Nazi Germany Becher was listed as a war criminal and was to be tried by the international court in Nuremberg. But his faithful friends, the Zionist leaders, did not abandon him. Kastner hurried to Nuremberg and signed a sworn affidavit in favour of the Nazi war criminal in which he said: «. . .Having been in personal contact with Becher from June 1944 to April 1945, I should like to emphasize, on the basis of personal observation, that Kurt Becher did everything within the realm of possibilities to save innocent human beings from the blind fury of the Nazi leaders. . .» and the affidavit ends as follows: «*I make this statement not only in my name but also on behalf of the Jewish Agency and the Jewish World Congress. signed Dr. Rudolf Kastner, official Jewish Agency in Geneva, Former Chairman of Zionist organisation in Hungary, 1943-45, Representative of Joint Distribution Commttiee in Budapest.*»

When cross examined on that affidavit in c.c. 124/53, Kastner, in reply to a judge question stated the following:

ISH BACKGROUND BY ZIONISM

«Dobkin and Barlas gave me permission to speak in the name of the Jewish Agency. And Mr. Parlzwig, chief of the political department of the World Jewish Congress, and Mr. Riegener, European representative of the World Jewish Congress gave me permission» (to offer the affidavit in the name of those Zionist organisations).

Now we might better understand why the Attorney General of Israel, Chaim Cohen, in person, tried so hard to defend Kastner in the libel action which was instituted not by Kastner himself (in a civil action, as was the normal practice) but the government of Israel itself. Chaim Cohen, who was later promoted to become a Justice of the Supreme Court, stated in his address to the Court of Appeal—an appeal by the government on the district court judgement—in January 1951:

«The man Kastner does not stand here as a private individual. He was a recognised representative, official or non official, of the Jewish National institutes in Palestine and of the Zionist executive; and I come here in this court to defend the representative of our national institutions...»

The Attorney General attacked the district court findings saying, inter alia:

«All this talk about Kastner's collaboration with the Nazis is fairy tales! fairy tales! Never in human history—neither Jewish nor Gentile—was there such a miscarriage of Justice.»

and furthermore:

«Kastner did nothing more and nothing less than was done by us in rescuing the Jews and bringing them to Palestine.»

3. *The Zionist Supreme Court Extricate the Zionist Chieftains*

All the 5 Supreme Judges sitting as the court of appeal—all of them very loyal Zionists of course—ignored the obvious connection between Kastner's actions and the policies of the top Zionist leaders. The only way out—in face of clearly proved evidence of collaboration between Kastner and Nazis was to either accept the Attorney General view and exonerate Kastner on the basis of «war circumstances» or to expose him as an individual cvollaborator, thus making a him a scapegoat for the Zionist regime.

One of the judges, judge Moshe Silberg, who adopted the second alternative, «explains» his attitude as follows:

«I do not say that he was the only man who possessed information (regarding the Nazi murder plan and its concealment from the 800,000 Jewish Hungarian—Ed.). It is quite possible that somebody else as well does not have a clear conscience with regard to this concealment. But we are dealing here with the guilt of Kastner and we do not have to make judgements on the guilt of other...»

It was the same judge who elsewhere in the same judgement wrote:

«We can sum up with these three facts:

a. That the Nazis didn't want to have a great revolt—'second Warsaw'—nor small revolts, and their passion was to have the extermination machine working smoothly without resistance. This fact was known to Kastner from the best source—from Eichmann himself.

b. That the most efficient means to paralyze the resistance will or the escape of a victim is to conceal from him the plot of the coming murder. This fact is known to every man and one does not need any proof or evidence of this.

c. That he, Kastner, in order to carry out the rescue plea for the few prominents, fulfilled knowingly and without good faith the said desire of the Nazis, thus expediting the work of exterminating the masses.
And also the rescue of Becher by Kastner... He who is capable of rescuing this Becher from hanging proves that the atrocities of this great war criminal were not so horrifying or despicable in his eyes... I couldn't base the main guilt of Kastner of this fact had it been alone, but when it is attached even from afar to the whole scene of events it throws retroactive light on the whole affair and serves as a dozen proofs of our conclusion.»

In any case Kastner was dead by then and took to his grave most of the top dirty secrets which could have incriminated the Zionist chieftains, and bring about the collapse of the Zionist regime.

4. *Zionist Guilt Cannot be Whitewashed*

During the trial in the district court Kastner claimed that he personally informed the Zionist leadership about the Nazi murder actions and plan, already in 1942 but it was the top Zionist bodies *outside* occupied Europe who deliberately suppressed the news. So he, Kastner, in the years to come was only following faithfully the Zionist line. «I learned», testified Kastner in court, «that the Jewish Agency and the Joint Distribution Committee representative in Switzerland; Moshe Schwable and Saly Mayer, did not give out information to the press about the mass killings. *They failed to give the press the news I sent from Budapest...* I informed them almost daily by cables about the pace of the extermination. My cables were never published anywhere.»

That evidence of Kastner receives further support in light of the general silence conspiracy adopted by the Zionist press in Palestine and elsewhere at the time, as well as in many individual complaints during and after the second world war, claiming bitterly that *all* the Zionist leaders of *all* organizations ignored the pleas of the persecuted and refused to publicise (during the war) the Nazi mass murder in Auschwitz and in other Nazi concentration camps. Furthermore, examination of the general attitude—declared attitude!—of the Zionist leaders leaves no room for doubt that Zionist-Nazi collaboration in Hungary was no «exceptional» blunder, but rather part of a planned Zionist policy.

The chief of the «rescue department» of the Jewish Agency, and a top Zionist leader in Palestine, Izaak Greenbaum, addressing the Zionist executive council on 18.2.1943 made the following statement:

«When they asked me, couldn't give money out of united Jewish Appeal funds for the rescue of Jews in Europe, I said, «no!» and I say again «no!». In my opinion one should resist this wave which pushes the Zionist activities to secondary importance.» (See Greenbaum's book «In Days of Holocust and Destruction», Hebrew, 1946).

«Having thus turned their back on the doomed Jews»—commented in 1961 the Zionist author Ben Hecht in his book «Perfidy» at p. 50—«the same leaders *later* utilized the extermination for raising millions of millions, and for collecting billions in reparations from the Germans...» All that what for? for expropriating the Arab people of Palestine and slandering them, the victims of *Zionist* persecutions and aggression, as criminals for refusing to give away the homeland to the Zionists

5. *Fascist Cynicism*

During the trial in the above c.c. 124/53 one of the government witnesses was Menachem Bader, General Manager of Israel's development ministry, and a «left-wing» member of the Jewish Agency during the war. He was cross examined on the point of Zionist «silence conspiracy». A letter was read to him in which an urgent plea to break the Zionist silence and help the persecuted was made by a Jewish Rabbi on 15.5.1944. «Did you receive this letter from Rabbi Weissmandel?» he was asked. «Letters like this came to us every day»—replied the Zionist leader approving once more of the deliberate suppression of the Nazi mass murder during the war.

Dr. Joseph Goebbels, one of the top Nazi war criminals, wrote in his dairy (1943) as follows: «In our Nazi attitude towards the Jews, there must be no squeamish sentimentalism.»

The Zionist leaders adopted then the Nazi attitude towards the same people who as they still claim to day are their «own brethern.»

The Attorney General of Israel had gone even further to slander the heroic masses of the Warsaw Ghetto who dared to resist the Nazis in the 1943 uprising. Here is what he stated in 1954 to the district court judge in the above c.c. 124/53 when referring to the people who were slaughtered by the Nazis in Hungary:

«For these and millions of Jews like them there came true the old curse, 'and, 10, they were meant but to be taken like sheep for slaughter, for killing, for destruction, for crusing and shame! There was no spirit in them. The Jewish masses in Warsaw were in the same condition».

The Zionists in Israel and elsewhere hold, of course, yearly «commemorations» of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising, but it is not the anti-fascist mass uprising which they commemorate, but rather their own concepts of militarism, chauvinism and racism. They claim that it was only handful of Zionists who fought with arms against the «enemies of the Jewish nation», just to prove the point that Jews can fight... anybody. They try—year after year of «commemorations»—to obliterate the anti-fascist character of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Undoubtedly, there were some Zionists amongst the Warsaw Ghetto heroes, but had they remained to live to know the secret Zionist-Nazi collaborations, to witness the murderous persecutions of the Arab people of Palestine and the fascist character of the Zionist regime—wouldn't they have fought Zionism precisely because Zionism itself is a form of fascism.

Before the creation of the Zionist state many people of Jewish background were deceived into believing that Zionism can be reconciled with progress, with anti-fascism (even with socialism—as some did believe). But certainly not in 1975, after such a long record of war crimes against Arabs, against people of Jewish background, against mankind in general. Those who support Zionism today, must be aware of the fact that they are supporting fascism and war crimes.

20. 5. 75

The following paper was presented by comrade Abdulla El-Ashtal, Premanent Representative of P. D. R. Yemen to the U. N., at the eighth annual convention of the Arab-American University Graduates on October 18, 1975 in Chicago.

POLITICS IN COMMAND : DIMENSIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

This paper addresses itself to the question of economic development from a political perspective. We are sometimes led to believe that political change and economic transformation are only remotely related. Proponents of academic specialization in the social sciences, especially in the United States, have insistently tried to divorce the study of politics from that of economics, thus, political economy is shunned as a socialist nomenclature. While it is understandable that such an academic orientation only serves to blur the intimate relationship between politics and economics, thus promoting a capitalist method of analysis, there is a growing awareness of the futility of such a proposition.

For the purpose of this discussion, let us define the term «development» as progressive political and economic change. This definition is necessary, at this stage, because of the different and sometimes ambiguous meanings which can be ascribed to that term. Such a definition, furthermore, underlines the fact that economic and political changes are not only interrelated but closely interdependent. In other words, a certain structural economic change in a given society will, eventually, lead to a concomitant political change, and vice versa. Hence, the process of development can be influenced by either political or economic change, whether it is evolutionary or revolutionary.

Having confined the scope of development as such, the purpose of this paper is to shed light on the processes of development in what is commonly known as the developing countries, with special reference to the model of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. That model has taken place in a country whose economy was totally oriented to serve colonial interests; and one which, after independence, opted for a popular democratic political system, finally leading to a socialist state. It is politically, economically and socially the antithesis of its colonial legacy and the defunct traditional system.

The post-independence experiment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen can truly be seen as a unique political choice for total emancipation and genuine independence, which introduced a radical change in the ownership of the means of production, and social relations. At least within the Arab world, that experiment is unique in a number of ways. First, the P.D.R.Y. completely broke away with British colonialism in every possible field. Second, the governing party—the National Front, opted for a Marxist-Leninist ideology and a popular Democratic system of government which is vehemently anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-feudalist and anti-capitalist. Third, the National Front, almost completely destructed the colonial state-apparatus,notably the armed forces, the police and the bureaucracy; that apparatus which served the interests of colonialism, feudal landlords, and urban bourgeoise was supplanted by a coalition of workers, peasants and fisherman, under the leadership of the National Front, and with the participation of other Marxist parties. Fourth, the N.L.F. pursued a foreign policy of independent militant internationalism, thus aligning itself with the national liberation movements, the socialist countries, and the parties of the working class in the capitalist countries.

The course of economic development which the P.D.R.Y. pursued was in line with its over-all progressive policies. The end of foreign control of the economy, the rural transformation program, and the complete re-orientation of the economy from services to agricultural and industrial production were all on the priority list of the newly independent country. Minimum effort was exerted to achieve possible self-reliance through the participation and involvement of the masses in economic reconstruction. After seven years of determined resistance to foreign interference and economic sabotage, the P.D.R.Y. is today one of the most politically stable states in the whole region.

Since the armed struggle started against British colonialism on October 14, 1967, the British authorities deliberately increased their annual budgetary assistance to Aden in order to win the bureaucracy to their side, and to make it difficult for any new regime to rule the country without their approval. In 1965, out of an annual 33M only 8M represented real domestic income—the rest was balanced by direct British budgetary assistance. In the last five years ending 1967, they increased their budgetary assistance fourfold—an increase of nearly 330%. «Thus direct and indirect British assistance which was 20% of the Gross National Income and 75% of the state budget was totally spent on salaries and wages for the civil and military state machinery.» That generous increase in the net income of the army and bureaucracy was not a haphazard British policy. It was a move, scrupulously calculated to bring any government after independence, under the mercy of Britain; for no government can drastically cut back the payroll of the army and civil service without facing the possibility of collapse. Having failed to establish a viable conservative government in the face of growing strength of the N.L.F. the British left behind an economic time bomb in the form of a 75% budget deficit and a decaying economy.

The dismantlement of British bases and the withdrawal of British forces caused a direct unemployment of 25,000 workers, and an annual loss of nearly £ 10M which was infused into the economy by British personnel. Almost 17,000 domestic servants mostly hired by the British were to lose their jobs.

On the political level the new regime had to maintain order in the whole country. The Police force under British colonialism was only restricted to the city of Aden. In the countryside the Sultans and Sheikhs were charged with keeping order. But, even before independence most of them had either been detained by the forces of the N.L.F. or they had fled to Saudi Arabia where they were armed and organized to harass the new republic. The threat of foreign intervention was also too real, because the P.D.R.Y. was not even recognized by its neighbours. In general, since the first days of its independence, the P.D.R.Y. was the victim of continued pressure and political harrassment by neighbouring reactionary governments and world imperialism.

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, therefore, emerged into a world where danger confronted it from every direction. Faced with that critical economic and political situation, the N.L.F. had but two choices. It had either to give in to British pressure, reinstate the authority of the feudalists, thus dispensing with its political and social programs, and actually committing political suicide; or it had to implement a revolutionary program, and withstand the immediate economic hardships and the alienation of a large segment of the army and the bureaucracy. In short, it had to yield to neo-colonialism or to pursue a line of continuous revolution against all the legacies of a semi-feudalist, underdeveloped social and economic system.

Despite all odds, the N.L.F. opted for the policy of genuine independence. The first six years of the P.D.R.Y. therefore were marked by continued struggle on all levels to consolidate the power of the radical factions within the National Front, to mobilize the masses of workers, peasants and fishermen, to destruct the state machinery and to embark on a new phase of the Popular Democratic revolution. In his opening address to the Fifth Congress of the N.L.F. which met in March 1973, Abdul-Fatah Ismail, the Secretary-General of the Front,

stressed the difficulties which the N.L.F. faced in changing from a guerilla organization to the agent of social transformation. He said, «*The N.L.F. is changing its status from being a mass organization destroying everything set up by the feudalist and colonial regimes and leading the broad masses through the national liberation stage into being a leading force in society directly responsible for authority, and drawing up programs for the broad masses.*»

But what are the factors that enabled the National Front to transform a colonial system into a people's democracy. After all the National Front was not as militarily strong as the army, although a large number of nationalist soldiers and officers supported the National Front, and some were secret members of the Front? And how could the National Front handle a dying economy, when it was from the beginning opposed by the urban bourgeoise and its political arm—the rival Front for Liberation of Occupied South Yemen, which was mainly active in Aden? And how could the National Front defend the territorial integrity of the new republic, when armies of mercenaries launched daily attacks on it? And finally, how could the National Front survive, when it was itself divided between radicals who from the first day of independence struggled against the establishment of a Bonapartite state under the guise of Arab socialism, and rightists who collaborated with the reactionary factions of the army, in an attempt to liquidate the people's militia and accommodate neo-colonialism?

To say it briefly, the most important element in the success of the revolution in the P.D.R.Y. was its people—the masses of exploited workers, peasants and fishermen who proved to be formidably strong when organized and politicized. For the National Front the euphoria of independence was only a beginning to a long journey of mass mobilization and politicization. In a way the mobilization of the masses never stopped until this day. When the Fifth Congress of the National Front was held to finally institutionalize the political program of the Left, Le Monde Correspondent Eric Rouleau, attending the congress described the scene as follows:

«*Aden had been filled for days with demonstrating workers and peasants; crowds of militants chanting 'long live Marxism-Leninism' greeted the delegates. The average age of the delegates was between twenty and thirty—most of them from poor backgrounds—and many were hardly able to read or write; but despite the difficulties involved the sessions were long, serious and highly politicized.*»

It is the continued politicization of the masses which drew from popular support for the radical program of the Left. The guerilla organizations, and the militia of the National Front did not throw their arms to settle for bureaucratic civilian life. They extended the organization of the National Front to all parts of the country and won the masses to their side. It was then possible for the National Front to purge the large majority of high ranking officers in the army, and to cleanse the bureaucracy of the anti-revolutionary elemnets. As early as August 1967, the left-wing militants who liberated Hadramout, even before independence, wrote the following in their weekly journal Ash-Sharara:

«*Making the socialist revolution means transforming existing social relations and installing revolutionary social relations, in other words destroying the old state apparatus and building an entirely new one in its place.*»

And in February 1968, Abdul-Fatah Ismail had to say this in reply to moderate political proposition from the Right:

«*The compromising petty-bourgeois leadership in the epoch of imperialism is even more dangerous for the national popular democratic revolution than the explicit counter-revolutionary policies of the semi-feudal, semi-bourgeois alliance.*»

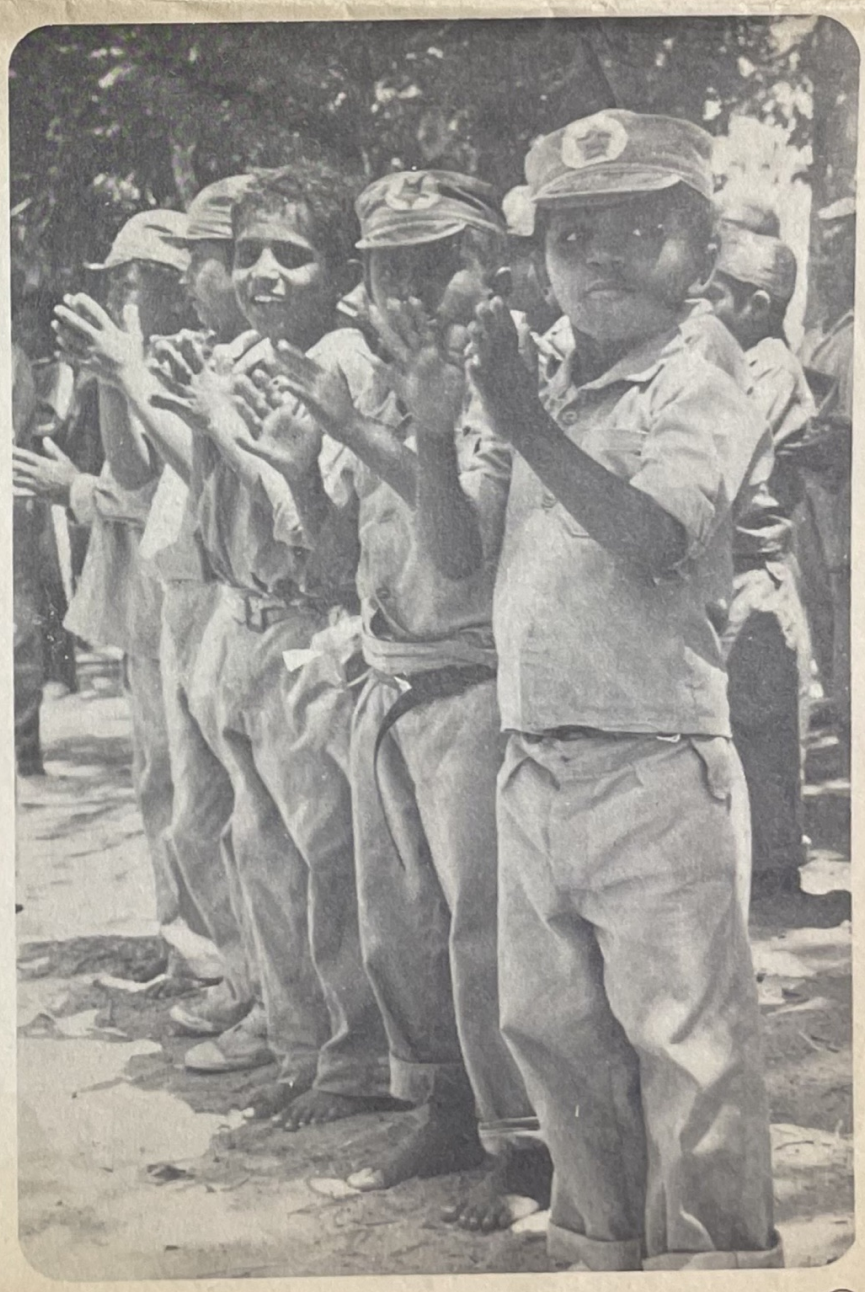
The revolutionary process of economic development thus began with the complete restructuring of the state. The army was gradually transformed into a productive political force, which was organized to work on projects related to the people, building schools, roads, and irrigation projects. On the other hand, workers and peasants were organized in militia units, militarily trained and politically educated at the same time. Defense Committees were also organized in the localities, through election. These committees are playing a very important role in different social, economic, educational and other activities, related to the development plans. A mass movement for the eradication of illiteracy is already under way. Voluntary work became part of the new revolutionary tradition. A new family law outlawed polygamy and gave women equal social, political and economic rights without prejudice to sex.

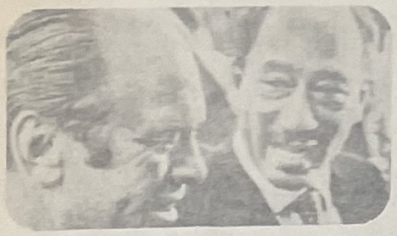
The total change in the ownership of the means of production was carried out mainly through the intifadhat—popular uprisings and revolts, led by the National Front Organization. The law was usually passed to legalize the new status quo—and even before that the important laws were discussed by the people through their defence committees. Speaking about the popular uprisings, Salim Robaye Ali, the Chairman of the Presidential Council said, «*the land does not give itself away. It has to be taken. The National Front encouraged the intifadhat and other popular revolts, because revolutionary violence is the only way to produce a definite break with the large landlords and the workers... this policy also had some major consequences: the peasants, fishermen and workers have set up militia to defend, arms in their hands, both their social gains and the power that made them possible.*»

By March 1972, twenty-one cooperative and twenty-four state farmers had been set up. Revolution in the hinterland became a strategic imperative. The distorted colonial economy has been restructured to serve the interests of the broad masses. The first steps had to be austerity measures. In February 1968 salaries of all employees, civil and military, were cut by amounts ranging from 60% for those earning over L200 a month to 6% for those earning between L23.5 and L25 a month. In June 1968 a comparable measure was applied to the private sector: a special tax was levied on all wages and salaries in the private sector ranging from 47.5% for those earning over L250 a month to 5% for those earning L25 a month. In both the private and public sectors those earnings under L23.5 were not affected. Further measures to increase government revenues followed; in December 1970, as part of the drive to establish national control of the economy, Aden's free port status was abolished. In 1971-1972, as the uprisings spread to Aden, the National Front encouraged calls for wage cuts in addition to those of 1968. In August 1972, after seven days of popular demonstrations that demanded wage cuts to withstand external political and economic pressures, and to purse a policy of self-reliance, all wages in state enterprises were cut by one-third. It is noteworthy, that wage cuts were affected in an atmosphere of total political mobilization. A Japanese tourist, who was in Aden during the seven-day mass demonstrations remarked that it was the first time that he had seen workers demanding wage cuts rather than increases. This deflation of the artificial economic affluence in the urban centers, caused workers migration to the rural areas—a trend which is quite unique in the developing countries.

The history of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen since independence has been one of constant political change towards the left. In his book, Arabia without Sultans, Fred Halliday summed up that turbulent period as follows: «*The N.L.F.'s achievements were considerable: it had between the period 1963-1967, swept out the British and the local elements who were tied to them—the sultans and the Adeni bourgeoise. In the post-1967 period it had carried this process further by mobilizing the rural and urban masses, by initiating a self-reliant development program, and by destroying the grip foreign capital had on the economy. The N.L.F. itself had changed both its ideology and its organization; from being a nationalist group loosely structured around a set of general demands it had become much more firmly organized and had built stronger ties with the population; its ideology had moved to the left because of the influence of objective forces, and because of the substantial influence of Marxism within the Organization.*»

Only last week another historical event took place in Aden. The N.L.F. merged with the Marxist Baathists and the small communist party in a new political party called the United National Front. Since four years representatives of the other two Marxist Organizations served in Cabinet posts in the N.L.F. Government, but since then an extensive dialogue for political unity among the three parties had been under way. With the complete merger of these parties, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen is setting an example for all other revolutionary groups and parties in the Arab world as a whole.





volutionary dimensions is based on: 1) what social and class forces does it ally itse'f with; 2) has it been able to determine the specific qualities of the historical conditions upon which it must operate; 3) does it view national and social revolution as a dialectical unity; 4) upon what social classes does the successful implementation of its program depend?» (p. 12).

Our task is not the condemnation and rejection of this political settlement, but it is of the utmost of importance that we struggle against all the dimensions of the present settlement, whose purpose is the consolidation and accentuation of imperialist interests and penetration of our region. Sadat's agreement to these accords has helped the acceleration of class polarization in the Middle East This leaves us with the option of choosing between the Sadat solution or the Vietnamese one. At the risk of being redundant there is only one solution—The Vietnamese have taught us well!

As for Sadat, we remind him that leaders come and go but people stay. Engels pointed out in the quote cited at the outset: «This power, arisen out of a society but placing itself above it, . . . is the state.» As the implicit and explicit class antagonisms are resolved, the state at whose helm Sadat remains will surely be toppled by the proletarian forces of Egypt.

NOTES

1) Even among previously progressive writers, a new wave of narrow regionalist thinking is seeping into their writings: See, Anouar Abdel-Malek «Al-Khousousiya Wa-Al-Asala» (Particularism and Originalism») **Kitabat Masriya** No. 9, Sept. 74 Beirut, pp. 189 199; and Mahmoud Amin Al-Alam's critique in the same issue, pp. 200-223.

2) Christian Science Monitor, Aug. 11/75, p. 12.

3) New York Times, Dec. 4/74.

4) Khalil Abou-Rashed «The Speeding up of the 'Open Door' Policy, After the Formation of the New Government» **Kitabat Masriya** No. 3, July 75, p. 34.

5) Al-Akhbar June 6/75.

6) Khalil Abou-Rashed, **op. cit.**, p. 45.

7) See, Yousef Abou Hajaj «The Economic Open Door Policy — Whom Does It Serve?» **Kitabat Masriya** No. 3, July 75, pp. 89-126.

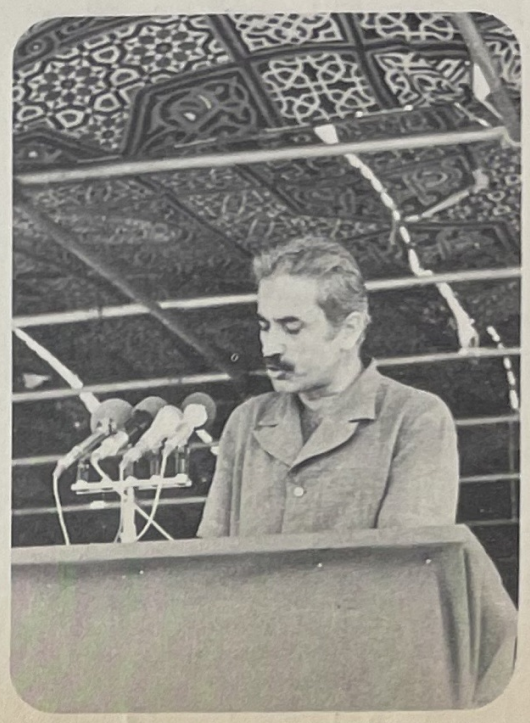
8) Khalil Abou Rashed, **op. cit.**, pp. 33-54.

9) Yousef Sayegh «Arab Oil Policies: Self-interest Versus International Responsibility» **Journal of Palestine Studies**, Vol. IV, No. 3, Spring 1975, p. 70.

10) **A-Safir**, June 9, 1975.

11) Theotomio Dos Santos; «The Structure of Dependence» in **The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment** edited by Charles K. Wilber, Random House, No. 9, 1973, p. 116. See also Paul Baran, **The Political Economy of Growth**, 1957, Monthly Review, No. 9, pp. 134-248.

REJECTION FRONT - MASS RALLY



On November 29th, the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the 'Partition of Palestine' the Front of Palestinian Forces Rejecting Capitulating Solutions held a mass meeting in Beirut. Comrade George Habash delivered a speech on behalf of the 'Rejection Front'. Other speakers included representatives of the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party—Lebanon, The National Social Party, The Nasserite Organization (Corrective Movement) and the Makassed Graduates Society. Speakers emphasized the necessity of continuing the revolutionary alliance between the Palestinian revolutionary forces and the fighting Lebanese organizations against the fascists in Lebanon. The following are excerpts from the speech delivered by comrade Habash on behalf of the 'Rejection Front'.

«. . .From this, we say with all responsibility and seriousness to Mr. Waldheim, the representative of the United Nations: If he has really heard that the Palestinians want to be part of the settlement plans. . . what he has heard does not represent in any way the will of our people and does not fit in with the historic struggle of our people, specially during the last 28 years.

The Palestinian Revolution is waging a battle on three fronts:

1. The battle in Lebanon.

2. The battle in the occupied territories.

3. The battle with the Arab masses against the settlement.

The battle in Lebanon: The first aim of the enemies' plans in Lebanon is to strike the Lebanese' masses movement. . .

The second aim is to strike the Palestinian resistance' presence. . .

The third aim is to cover for the capitulationist agreements that are being adopted by many Arab regimes and rulers.

The Palestinian 'Rejection Front' salutes with all pride the gun carried by the Lebanese National Movement. This does not mean that the Palestinian Revolution is neutral in this battle. . . we shall not let them succeed in what they call neutralizing the (Palestinian) resistance. *The resistance will continue to protect the masses who adopted our vanguards and protected them from the conspiracies of the enemy. Based upon this, we are not neutral, but we are with the Lebanese masses. The present battle must be conducted within the framework of a Lebanese-Palestinian front, headed by the Lebanese National Movement.*

The Palestinian revolution should be very proud of the great changes that has taken place during the struggle in Lebanon. In 1969, 1970 and 1973, the Lebanese reactionary authorities attacked the Palestinian resistance, the Lebanese masses stood behind the Palestinian resistance. Now we find the Lebanese facing the enemy, supported by the Palestinian resistance.

That is not all. The Palestinian revolution knows, and works on the basis that the Lebanese revolutionaries should be on its side when it goes back to Palestine.

The battle in the occupied territories: The battle in the occupied territories against the elections and the 'local administration'. Their aim is to distort the nature of our masses' struggle there and to create hireling committees in order to claim that they are dealing with the aspirations of the Palestinian people. What was the answer of our people in the occupied territories? Demonstrations, strikes and mass demonstrations under clear slogans, which the oppressed and the poor wrote on the walls. The slogans say: We will not vote, we will not yield, out from our homeland!—This was our people's answer.

The battle against the settlement: The most important battle is the one that the Palesinian revolution wages together with the Arab national liberation movement. The settlement is not an abstract thing any more and it is time that we learn from our experiences. We tell the Palestinian leaders and the Syrian leadership clearly and honestly that they can start a historical struggle in this region, if they are sincere.

The PLO should adopt a revolutionary position and withdraw from the framework of the settlement. There is a historical chance for a fighting unity between Syria, Iraq and the Palestinians.

Some people ask «What does the 'Rejection Front' want?» We want to fight the settlement and we will continue the struggle until the PLO is outside the settlement. . . I would like to clarify something on behalf of the fighters, cadres, leaders and masses of the 'Rejection Front'. If a Palestinian delegation will go to sit beside the Israeli delegation in Geneva or anywhere else, then our masses will step with their feet over this leadership. Do not let them think that they can slip to Geneva under the conditions of the battle in Lebanon, or under any other condition!

We appreciate the positions of all the countries that condemned Zionism as a form of racism at the U.N. We feel that this is a great victory achieved by the struggle of our masses. We consider this as a clear permission to continue the struggle on behalf of humanity to destroy the racialist entity which the U.N. has thus condemned.

This should not be understood as a chauvinist position. Recently Iraq and earlier Libya took decisions allowing all Jews who emigrated from there or any other Arab country to return. All other Arab countries should follow suit. Our battle is against Zionism and not against Jews.»

ARAB SOCIALIST ACTION PARTY (ASAP)

OUTLINE POSITION

Since March this year, the Lebanese national and progressive movement grew both qualitatively and quantitatively. The clashes proved to be a big test for many of the progressive organizations. Many of them took up arms when they found themselves threatened by the attacks of the fascists and the forces of the regime.

Even though the national movement as a hole wages one battle against one enemy, it does not have a united program on the political and practical level, the necessary condition for effectiveness and sound military practice that ensures victory. But this is not the time or place to enumerate these mistakes, which we consider loopholes. As long as these forces preserve the minimum level of 'unity' we will continue to fight with it in the same shelter.

The Lebanese national movement is composed of many organizations. Unfortunately some of the forces that are most effective in taking political decisions are least effective on the battlefield. The Arab Socialist Action Party (A.S.A.P.)—Lebanon is not formally in the National Progressive Front, it is the local branch of a pan-Arab organization and sister of the PFLP. It played an essential role during the fighting and has lead the national forces in more than one major area

The major political difference between the A.S.A.P. and other Lebanese national organizations (that does not mean that the A.S.A.P. stands alone) is the fact that it does not accept compromise with the fascist elements within the regime. Realizing very well that at this stage the situation is not yet mature enough to call for the establishment of a new authority, it is nevertheless important to tell the masses that their destiny will be determined by their efforts to protect themselves and the level of struggle they put to achieve their demands.

It is ironic that until the first week in December it was the fascist forces who determined the time and nature of any cease-fire. This is contrary to the national role that the revolutionary movement should adopt. The socialist parties should be on the offensive to achieve the masses' aspirations—none of the previous cease-fires has been predicated on a minimum demand for the reforms that are essential in the new situation of Lebanon. It is a fact that in this field the fighting masses are ahead of the leadership of the national movement. The second difference is militarily. While most organizations have adopted a defensive tactic, it was necessary to adopt a defensive-offensive one in order to direct hard and serious blows at the fascist forces so that they would acquiesce to the demands of the masses because of a political and military advantage in favour of the national movement. This became obvious during the first week of December when the fighters of the national movement launched their attacks and forced the fascists to retreat because they had suffered heavy losses. The previous tactic allowed the fascists to strengthen their forces and to gain 'confidence' which they had lacked at the beginning of the clashes. It is most apparent in the periods of cease-fire that the national movement had the illusion that it could achieve some results through reconciliation and by withdrawing the fighters and taking the arms from the hands of the masses. The A.S.A.P. issued a statement which said:

«*We call on the members of the organizations and the armed masses in all areas to protect their rifles and to remain firm in facing the fascists. We warn all the forces who took this decision from the danger of continuous retreat from the fascist forces which are continuing their preparations in order to blackmail the national movement into more retreats.*» This emphasizes the fact that fascist reactionary violence cannot be stopped by retreats but only by organized revolutionary violence...

Another point of difference is the position towards the liberal right-wing forces and elements. These are best represented in the person of prime minister Rashid Karami. This force, the liberal right cannot fully separate itself from the national movement because its base used to be the lower social classes. As such its main concern and aim is the preservation of the status-quo of the system. Hence it has advocated a cease-fire that does not guarantee nor insure the adoption of any of the demands. Its method is best described as a tribal reconciliation. On this matter the A.S.A.P. issued a communique stating:

«*The struggle waged by our masses in the popular areas is a class-struggle... struggle of the oppressed of Lebanon against the monopolist class of merchants, capitalists and state officials... our masses who carried arms to defend themselves and the Palestinian revolution do not think for one second that the situation can end by a reconciliation between the President and the prime minister or between any two leaders...*»

«The retreating method of what is called the 'Karami-plan' is only one way to abort the demands of the masses after they failed to strike them through the reactionary-fascist forces...

Let us raise our condemnation of the tribal reconciliation and prepare ourselves for the next rounds of the battle... We will continue our political struggle under the protection of the guns of our fighters.»

The following events proved the correctness of the above position.

The fascists were only gaining time to strike again and to create a favourable atmosphere that would permit the intervention of the army as a full force in the clashes.

«The bringing in of the army little by little as happened in the north and the Bekaa, or declaring martial laws or carrying out a coup d'Etat are all different dimensions of the same thing... The conspiracy against the masses.»

Based on this it was necessary that the more revolutionary and radical line should apply its plan in the last clashes and lead the battle according to the following:

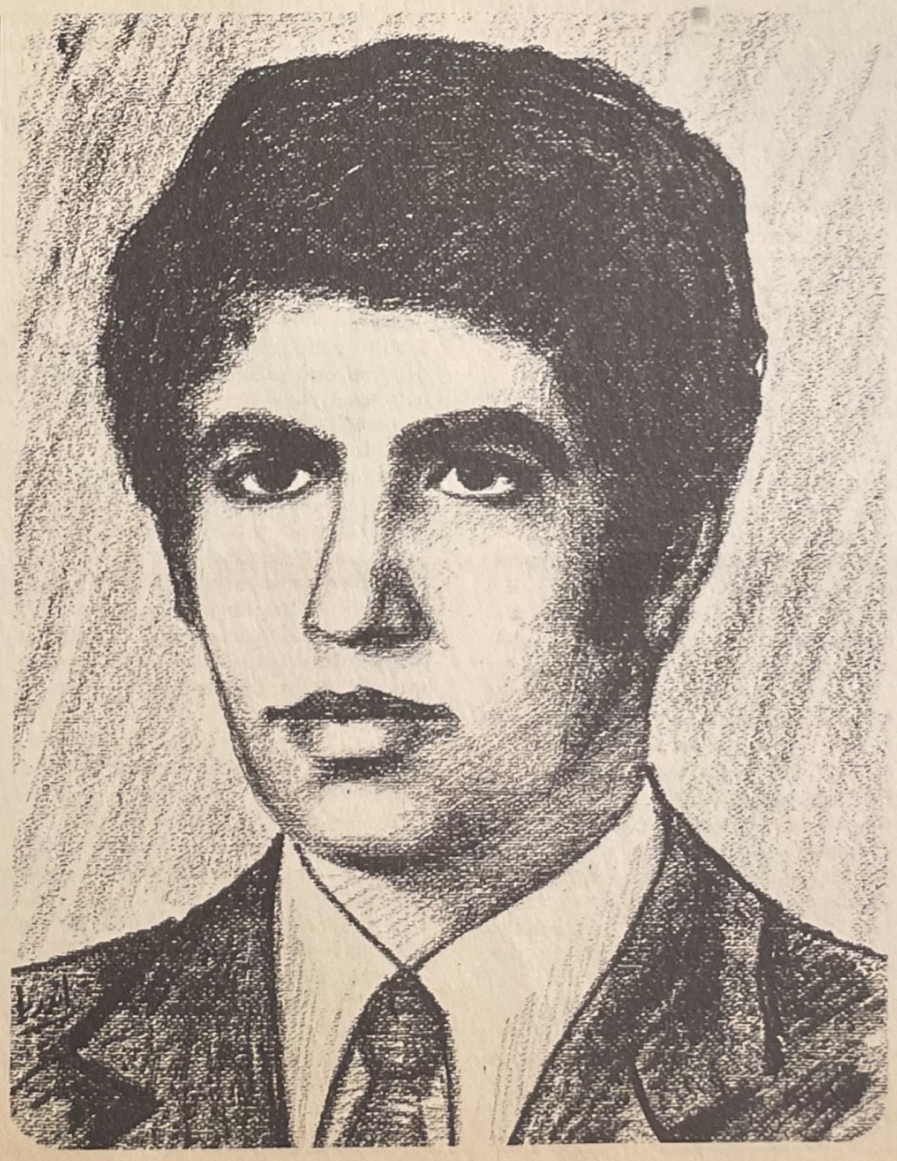
1) *To direct severe blows at the enemy forces.*

2) *To expose the regime's policy of securing protection to the threatened enemy forces.*

3) *To reject all reconciliation that is not based on political reform and the adoption of the demands of the national movement.*

4) *To abort all political gains that the fascists may attain through reconciliation with reformist forces.*

Thus it is most important to punish the fascists severely until they admit their military defeat and this is reflected on their political positions towards the masses' demands.



Comrade Yehia Deeb, member of the political bureau of the Arab Socialist Action Party (A.S.A.P.)—Lebanon was kidnapped on September 9, 1975 by elements of the fascist phalangists on the road from Tripoli and was tortured for several days before he was murdered.

The comrade was born in Tripoli, Lebanon in 1950. He joined the A.S.A.P. in 1969. He was a prominent leader of the teachers' movement in Lebanon. During these last months the A.S.A.P. lost a number of its fighters and cadres. Comrade Deeb was a symbol of the committed communist. He had participated in the battles of Beirut and Tripoli.

The A.S.A.P. honoured its martyr by calling the first unit of its fighters who occupied part of Ain El Rummaneh the «Comrade Deeb Unit». They were the first fighters to enter the fascist region. The second unit was another A.S.A.P. unit carrying the name of another martyr: «Ali Sheab».

The PFLP, The Peoples Revolutionary Party of Jordan, other A.S.A.P. branches and various organizations of the Arab national liberation movement sent messages of salutation to the A.S.A.P.—Lebanon leadership expressing their sympathy for the loss and their solidarity with their revolutionary line.

MESSAGES AND DECLARATIONS

During the past 3 months a series of occasions passed that demanded from the PFLP to send messages and declare positions. The following are excerpts from a number of these messages saluting important historic events.

«Palestinian Rejection Front» with the self-determination of the people of the western Sahara.

The Front of Palestinian Forces Rejecting Capitulating Solutions issued a communique on the ongoings in the western Sahara.

November 18, 1975.

«The Rejection Front» declared since its Formation that the proposed settlement aims not only at the Palestine national liberation struggle but against all sectors of the Arab liberation forces, especially those that engage in armed struggle.

The revolutionary vanguard that has been carrying the armed struggle in the SAKIAT AL HAMRA and the GOLD VALLEY against Spanish colonialism is an expression of the masses' will to evict the colonialists and establish the democratic society as part of the progressive democratic unified Arab society. For all of this, the 'Rejection Front', which believes that armed struggle is the main method to achieve the masses' aspirations and freedom cannot but be with the struggling forces which carry arms to kick out the Spanish colonialists. . . and its right to auto-determination without any pressure, external or internal.»

The Central Council of the 'Rejection Front' sent a telegram to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on the occasion of the October revolution.

«On the 58th anniversary of the great October Revolution, which opened the road in front of the struggling peoples to defeat colonialism and imperialism, the Central Council of tye 'Rejection Front' takes the opportunity to extend its congratulations and wishes to the Soviet peoples. . . this great occasion will make us more determined to continue the revolutionary struggle against the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance to liberate all of Palestine and to establish the 'democratic state'. . .»

ANGOLA - M.P.L.A.

The PFLP sent a salutation cable to comrade Dr. Agostinho Neto, President of the People's Republic of Angola on the occasion of achieving independence under the leadership of M.P.L.A.

«Revolutionary greetings. The PFLP salutes the independence of Angola and the establishment of the People's Republic of Angola. This is a real expression of your achievements after long years of struggle and sacrifices. Your victory is one of all national liberation movements that struggle for liberation and progress, specially for the Palestinian revolution and the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people.

On this historic occasion, the PFLP realizes well the dangers that surround your victory resulting from the imperialist intervention. . . The PFLP would like to emphasize its support to the independence of Angola under the leadership of M.P.L.A. and its support to your continuous struggle against imperialist conspiracies. . .»

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

A message to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the anniversary of the Chinese revolution's victory.

«Your revolution has been a great example of people's determination and ability to fight for their freedom and independence. . . specially for our Palestinian Arab people who struggle against the Zionist enemy and the imperialist tools in the area.

Your revolution for 26 years from its victory, has taught that the people are the ones who make the victory in spite of all conspiracies to abort their struggle. . . Our revolution and our people are, at this particular stage, facing an imperialist-zionist-reactionary conspiracy that will guarantee U.S. imperialist interests and concede the Zionist presence on our land. . .

Your revolution's victory will remain a guide to our struggle against imperialism and its tools. Once more allow us to salute you on the anniversary of your victory.»

G.D.R.

On the national day of the German Democratic Republic, a message by comrade Habash was sent to the polit-bureau of the Socialist Unity Party.

«On my behalf and that of the comrades of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, I salute you and the people of the G.D.R., on this occasion.

. . .From this, our position of rejecting this settlement, and our determination to continue the revolutionary struggle and that of the Arab masses for liberation. . . your people play a very important role under your party leadership. You give a live example to all peoples in building socialism. . .»

P.D.R.Y

On the 12th anniversary of the Yemeni revolution, the polit-bureau of the PFLP sent a message to the National Front of P.D.R.Y. for the occasion.

«The more revolutionary achievements that you can realize inside the P.D.R.Y. will strengthen the revolution and its roots while facing the conspiracies of reaction. The extension of the Omani revolution is another sign of the ability of the revolution to challenge the enemies. We take this opportunity to emphasize on the same position that the Palestinian revolution and the revolution in P.D.R.Y. share with all the Arab revolutionary organizations. So let us struggle more to defeat the conspiracy which aims at liquidating the progressive forces.»

CUBA

On the occasion of the convening of the first congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, the PFLP sent the following message of solidarity:

«On behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) it behooves me on this great historic occasion to extend our most revolutionary greetings to the people of Cuba, to their Communist Party and to the members of the first congress.

The convening of your first congress is only one of the many living examples of the victories you have scored in the course of your ardent and continuous struggle. In fact it is an event of great significance to all revolutionary forces the world over.

We impatiently await the successful termination of the congress so that we could benefit of the rich lessons of your struggle for liberation, the struggle against underdevelopment and the struggle to build socialism. Only recently the elections in the province of Matanzas were held, a real display of the qualitative differences between the democracy of socialism as opposed to bourgeois parliamentary democracy. Cuba is a small country with a formidable heart and strength. Its strength lies in its people who are the backbone of its defense and development. *Cuba and the Cuban revolution are a living inspiration to all revolutionaries.* As you proceed to take bold and imaginative measures in building socialism and miles away from the heartland of U.S. imperialism, you help to accelerate the process of world revolution.

The people of Cuba have a rich history and your struggle to build socialism in the present is of great historical significance. As you proceed in this process you are inflicting major setbacks upon imperialism, the enemy of the peoples.

We too are part of a small people, but our people have big hearts. We have learned from Cuba and Vietnam that there are no insurmountable obstacles. Your leaders have taught us that the seemingly impossible, with time will become the revolutionary possible. We have learned that no matter how devastating the imperialist attack, it can never destroy the revolutionary spirit and practice of our people.

Our people have not defeated imperialism yet, but with the support and solidarity of the progressive and socialist countries, we will certainly be victorious.

On behalf of our militants, cadres and leadership, we salute your first congress and wish that you will achieve and attain all the needed and hoped for goals.

We eagerly await the results and already we are certain of the success you will meet.

THE RE - ASCENT OF THE RIGHT IN PORTUGAL AND THE HESITANCY OF THE SPANISH LEFT

«World history moves clearly, without any doubt towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it does not move towards it in an easy, simple or straight way.» LENIN

Spain and Portugal are witnessing important and historic developments. Up till lately and particularly before the last right-wing turn in Portugal, there were good chances that the Iberian sub-continent would witness radical changes that might lead to the establishment of national democratic regimes. But the struggle of the leftist forces in the two countries has been dominated by two negative characteristics. The first is disunity and the second is hesitancy.

The coup d'Etat which took place in Portugal about two years ago found the leftist forces disunited and without clear and precise programs. But this situation could have been altered. The parties could have established and affirmed a *minimum* program that expresses the aspirations of the Portugese masses. Unfortunately this did not take place and the forces remained disunited even on the account of seeing its allies and later themselves being liquidated one after another.

The radical left advocated the escalation of the struggle against all rightists while still lacking the strong base that would enable it to carry out such a task or even to turn it into a popular demand.

On the other hand the Communist party was satisfied in the earlier days with the favourable adoption it received from the Armed Forces Council. With its status decreasing it did not direct its efforts towards the left, but more towards the center forces and the military. Its compromising tendencies led to the weakening of its bargaining power on the higher level with the Armed Forces Council and the other political parties. It decreased also its ability to lead a mass movement that would force the authorities to yield to its demands. As Lenin said, the power of a communist party does not consist in the number of votes it receives, but by its ability to carry out the program that expresses masses' aspirations. The third forces, the marxist elements in the Armed Forces Council were also aspiring for more power but without committing themselves or strongly being associated with the communist party or the other marxist organizations.

This disunity enabled the rightist forces to seize power and to oust the marxist elements from the Armed Forces Council starting with the ex-prime-minister and lately Generals Caravalho and Fabio. This shows that the right has shifted the balance of power in its favour and is bound to continue this line of liquidating the left. It is also trying to blackmail the Communist Party by offering it to stay in the government on the condition of 'not interfering' with the decisions of the Armed Forces Council.

When the left was ousted from the Armed Forces Council the Communist Party distributed leaflets calling on the masses to keep calm. It warned its allies from 'going too far' and 'overestimating their power' which might lead to desperate actions. The other leftist organizations also kept quiet during this period. These positions clearly show that the leftist parties prefer to avoid any clashes with the regime at the present time. But the last events, the rise of right-wing officers to influential positions and the move to bring Portugal closer to capitalist Europe, is expected to lead all leftist parties, including the Communist Party, to review their positions and roles in the present situation. The gradual transformation of power to the rightist forces will eventually leave the left without any ability of taking the initiative necessary to save Portugal from once more falling under the dictatorship of the right.

While in Portugal the right prevents the left from gaining any solid ground in the battle for power, the Spanish right excludes the possibility of allowing the left to come again to open political life in the country. The new king is not yielding any power but only bargaining on the possibility of liberalization through the same government apparatus that always existed under the previous 'King' Franco.

The conditional change which Juan Carlos is offering does not represent a real change. Up to now this is proved by two examples. First the conditional amnesty act regarding some political prisoners. This act excluded the prisoners accused of 'terrorist acts', propagating 'terrorism' or belonging to 'terrorist organisations'. Since all revolutionary organisations are considered as 'terrorist' the amnesty did not include the majority of political prisoners jailed under Franco's regime.

The second example is the government decision to ban the Socialist Labour Party from holding a press conference. When a regime bans a liberal party such as the Socialist Labour Party from expressing its views, it is not allowing the first principle of the bourgeois democracy that Juan Carlos promised, to be practised.

«Nothing has changed in Spain». This sentence by one of the opposition leaders best describes the present situation. The opposition front should not have illusions regarding the policies of Juan Carlos. If the declarations and promises made were aimed at splitting the opposition front which extends from the liberals to the extreme left, the choice of Juan Carlos to preserve the oppressive machinery of the state should unify them more.

Till now the opposition front has not worked out a clear position. All political observers were surprised that there has not been any serious opposition to the moves of Juan Carlos. The hesitancy of the Spanish opposition to take major steps would cost it the enthusiasm expressed by the masses immediately before and during Franco's illness. It also will enable Juan Carlos to tighten his grip on the situation. The present period is the most critical and for the regime. It is trying to gain time in order to force the opposition to retract.

Another characteristic of the Spanish opposition is its disunity, which a brief survey of the different parties clearly illustrates.

TANKS OF LOYALIST ARMY UNIT BEFORE MOVING AGAINST LEFTISTS

1) The Communist Party which still enjoys strong support and has a solid secret organization is facing internal problems. On the one hand are its 'moderate' leaders, represented by the elements living in Paris, on the other hand the more leftist elements are leading the party inside Spain.
2) On the left of the C.P. is the Workers Party, previously known as the International Communist Party. But the weakness of this organization consists in the fact that its major support comes from students. It has not been able to build a solid workers organizations. Traditionally the C.P. lead this sector of the society along with the 'Workers Committees'.
3) The FRAP and the C.P.—Marxist-Leninist gain their popular support through their militancy and because they carry out limited operations within the line of armed struggle. These two organizations, the first of which is believed to be a cover for the C.P.—M.L. have proposed a program that calls for the following:
   1. — Abolishment of the monarchy.
   2. — Land reform.
   3. — Nationalization of foreign companies and big enterprises.
   4. — Freedom for political parties.
   5.— Release of all political prisoners.

While this program is a reasonable minimum platform for the Spanish left, the C.P. opposes the confrontationary method advocated by the FRAP. The C.P. prefers an alliance with the Socialist Labour Party, which is supported by the European regimes. Their action plan is limited to political struggle—specifically to strikes; but so far these two parties have not made any effective moves.

Meanwhile the Socialist Labour Party hopes to gain Juan Carlos' favour through the pressure of social-democratic parties in Europe. Therefore it does not want a close affiliation with the Communist Party. The Socialist Labour Party is with the liberal forces of the regime in their anti-communism and efforts to decrease the influence of the leftist forces. This policy is pursued in spite of the efforts by the C.P. to convince the liberal forces of its 'moderation'.

It is the dilemma of the left in Spain that it waits for the initiative of the regime instead of playing the role of the vanguard. It does not put forward a clear and solid program that would mobilize the masses and unify the left. For military, economic and political reasons the Iberian sub-continent is vital to western Europe and the U.S.A. Therefore the revolutionary forces have to face a bigger enemy—an internal one who is strongly supported by imperialism Such a situation should not lead the revolutionary forces to yield to compromise. On the contrary it clearly identifies their tasks and the program necessary. The hesitancy and disunity of the left in Portugal and Spain have only helped the right. A successful communist movement is the one capable to realize its role and play it at every particular stage.

ciety and to establish a national democratic regime instead of the reactionary one existing now. Among these forces is the Arab Socialist Action Party (ASAP)—Lebanon.

The tactics of the battle so far has been according to the following:

A. The battles has been of the short span ones, followed by a cease-fire of shorter periods. This has benefited the reactionary camp both on the military and political levels. Militarily, they increase their combat ability in the areas where they were threatened and bring in more arms to the areas which are cut-off from their supply depots. Politically, they try to achieve some of their immediate points; such as neutralizing certain forces. The best example is when the PLO witndrew its militia from the Chiah area in the month of June and left the «Rejection Front» and the Lebanese revolutionary forces to fight alone against the Phalangists. Also the attempts to show that they are with certain Arab progressive regimes. The last invitation by the Syrian regime to Pierre Gemayel, the leader of the Phalangist Party, aimed at breaking the isolation which the Phalangists faced after their massacre of the bus in the month of March.

B. The battles has spread from one area to another—from Beirut to Tripoli and to the other smaller towns and villages where exists major presence for the two sides. The beginning of the clashes in every area was caused by the provocation of the right-wing forces through massacres that they carry out against civilians—usually just because they are Moslems. They hope to draw the other side into the same type of practice and thus destort the nature of the struggle in Lebanon.

C. Escalation of the terrorist and fascist acts inorder to spread a state of chaos that would lead a large sector of the society to accept the interference of the Lebanese Army under the name of «securing the law and order and protecting the citizens.»

D. The attempt to arabize the conflict in Lebanon. This attempt has so far failed. When the foreign ministers of the Arab countries met to discuss the issue, these could not reach any objective solution because Libya, Syria and the PLO boycotted the meeting. This was followed by attempts to internationalize the Lebanese conflict. There were and are still attempts to present the case to the U.N. under the false claim that there is a «foreign intervention». Other attempts were made through the «invitation» of the French President emissary former Premier Maurice Couve de Murville.

E. The best the reactionary forces had hoped for was a «solution» like that of 1958 which carried the title of «no vanquished no conquer» after the traditional leadership then accepted a compromise. This in fact is nothing more than a tribal way of selling out on the masses demands, and this is exactly what the right-wing (both Christians and Moslems) hope to reach. Thus they will preserve their system, the system of the bourgeois class.

D. The escalation of the attacks against one group within the national movement or the resistance movement in hope to divide and split these movements by praising the other side and offering certain possible deals of co-existence in the future. The attempts so far has failed, but the danger is still existing. During the past the PLO presented the Dialogue Committee with a memorandum stating that it is not involved in the conflict and that it respects and acts according to the agreements of the official Lebanese authorities. That can mean that the PLO will not be part of any conflict that contradict the existing agreements between the resistance movement and the Lebanese authorities. Another example is in the interview which was published in the New York Times with Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). He said that the role of the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon is concerned with the protection of the Palestinian revolution and the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. What about the Lebanese progressive movement? We hope what was written will not be truly practiced—although we still object and condemn this cunning method which is not frank and clear with the masses or the news media.

As the right-wing started to feel the heavy losses that they suffered during the last clashes, another cease-fire was being prepared. But like previous times, the cease-fire is not expected to last. The losses of the right-wing forces caused a great disturbance to the President of Lebanon, Suleiman Franjieh and forced him to come out with his most clear and most aggressive attack on the leftist forces. This left little room to wonder where the regime really stands and on whose side the «special units» of the atmy have been fighting. Franjieh said: «*I wonder: can we separate between the course followed by Zionism and that followed by the Left—noting that they are fellow travellers even if their goals are different?*» The President under the constitution has no right to take political stands and decisions. When Franjieh took his biased position with the isolationist reactionary fascist forces, he left little possibility if any to reach any political solution while he is still president. This makes us believe that the clashes will continue at least till a new president can be elected.

Under this present situation the tasks of the progressive forces should be:

1. To emphasize the class character of the battle—in other words this is the battle of the Lebanese masses against the monopolist comproder and capitalist classes. Thus any cease-fire should be followed by a strong escalation of political struggle in order to achieve the demands of te masses on the political, social and economic levels.

2. To struggle for the unification of the patriotic and progressive forces. This can not be reached before all parties and organizations declare clear and precise positions from what is going on—and to give up for good the policy of illusionary thinking of the possibility to reform within the regime's institutions.

3. The mobilization of the masses on the basis of their class character and to destroy any existing obstacles that result from confessionailsm, which is advocated by the right-wing forces.

4. The co-ordination with the Palestinian resistance. The rejection of any force that hopes to play the role of the policeman on the national movement.

5. To reach out for the Arab masses support and also that of the patriotic regimes. The battle is that of the Lebanese masses and the Palestinians on the land of Lebanon. But the battle is part of the Arab masses battle against the settlement which aims at liquidating all Arab progressive forces.

LEBANESE NATIONAL CRISIS A BACKGROUND

Thus the internal and external forces mostly involved in the conflict helped to a great extent to safeguard the confessional character in Lebanon and to bring back to the regime the same traditional leaders that have governed Lebanon since its independence in 1943. The slogan which was raised after the clashes of 1958 «No Victor No Vanquished» expresses best the spirit of the result.

But the clashes of 1958 brought to the attention of the new regime the necessity of social changes, particularly in the southern part of Lebanon. Studies were made in hope to find a solution, but the same regime which propagated wages, but the major programs of land irrigation and building a major dam in the south of Lebanon were never achieved

At the same time, the progressive movement was more concerned with the legal battle of its existence rather than the demands of the oppressed classes. The priority given to the legal recognition overshadowed the demands of the progressive forces. Actually it forced it to compromise—the legal recognition which was given to some leftist parties was on the condition that these parties do not come into a major conflict with the regime. This situation was only altered after the Palestinian resistance came to existence in Lebanon and gave the Lebanese progressive movement a historical chance to be liberated from the authorities' threats to strike the latter by force.

To understand fully the Lebanese confessional phenomena, the reader should realize that the traditional Arab Liberation Movement has historically been associated with Islam, although not in a chauvinistic or confessional way. Many Christian thinkers have played a major and important role in introducing the secular Arab nationalist thought. The inability of the progressive movement's leadership to give the oppressed classes' struggle its real dimension have enabled the reactionary side to keep confessionalism a major factor in every clash. The forces of confessionalism have during the last two centuries, been more successful in their aims than those struggling for a secular Lebanon.

This fact started to change only after the Palestinian resistance movement entered Lebanon and spread its revolutionary strategy and the slogan of the Palestinian democratic state, which overcomes confessionalism and presents the radical revolutionary solution to the contradictions. (See PFLP Bulletin Nos. 16 and 17).

This was the situation of Lebanon in its previous crisis. The present clashes are between the forces of progress, who aim to change this situation, and the forces who have their interests in the status quo and as such are doing their best to give the present clashes a confessional character. While the battle is still going on there is a historical chance for the progressive movement to achieve results that can represent a historical change in the nature of clashes and conflict in Lebanon.

PFLP BULLETIN

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: Europe – $5; US & Canada – $6; Elswhere – $8 or equivalent.
PAYMENTS should be directed to Al-Hadaf, P O. Box 212, BEIRUT, LEBANON.
CORRESPONDENCE should be directed to International Relations Committee of PFLP, c/o AL-HADAF